EMIGRE NO.52

Heroes
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Selfsameness
Las Vegas
World of Money
Diazo Haiku

FALL 99

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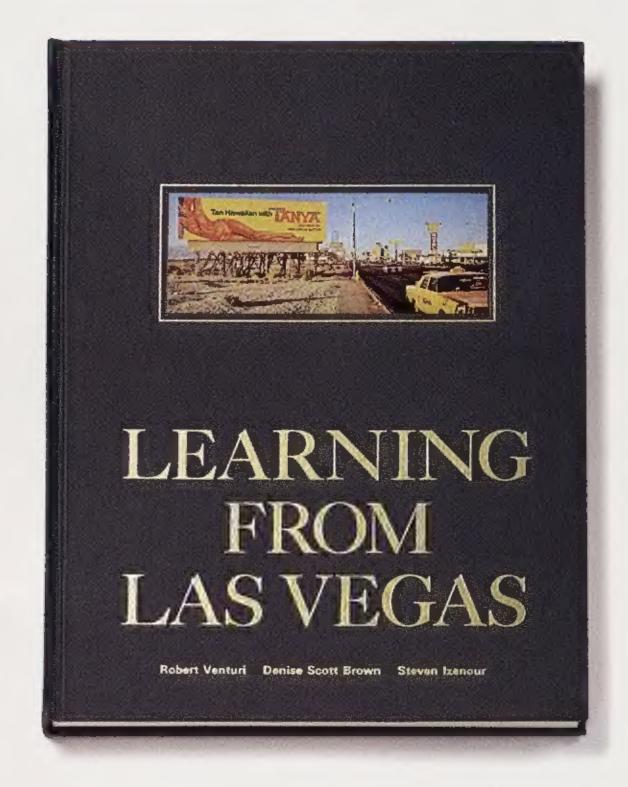


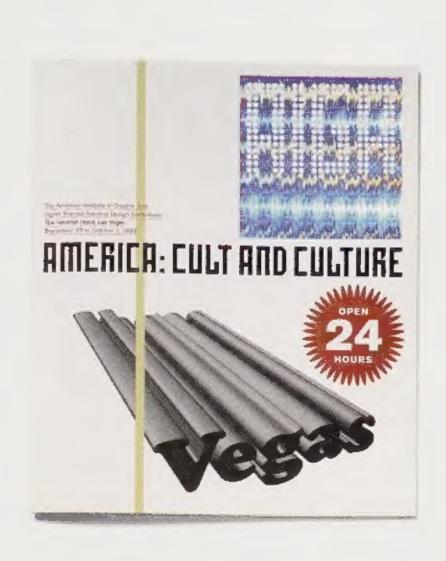
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EMIGRE NO.52 WINTER 99

The magazine you love to hate





Learning from Las Vegus
rublished and designed by the Mit press, 1972

America: Cult and Culture

PROGRAM FOR THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF GRAPHIC ARTS EIGHTH BIENNIAL

NATIONAL DESIGN CONFERENCE, LAS VEGAS

PUBLISHED BY THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF GRAPHIC ARTS, 1999

DESIGNED BY LUKE HAYMAN

INTRODUCTION

MANY OF YOU, I'm sure, attended this year's annual AIGA conference in Las Vegas. If you didn't, you missed a great opportunity to visit one of America's most graphic cities, or, as Vicki Gold Levi in the AIGA *Journal* put it more tellingly, "design purgatory."

It's difficult, as a graphic designer, not to like Las Vegas. The appeal of this city to designers is obvious; nowhere can you find bigger graphics, bigger type, and more samples of the vernacular and Americana. The promotional material for the AIGA conference rightfully spoke of Las Vegas being "the purest expression of America and American urbanism, a place where graphic design becomes architecture." It's an inspiring place for the visually oriented.

No one understood this better than Robert Venturi. In his seminal book, Learning from Las Vegas, published in 1972 and co-authored with Denise Scott Brown and Steven Izenour, he argued for the value of symbolism in commercial art and strip architecture. Through in-depth analysis and hundreds of images, he showed us how we may gain insight from the Strip's existing commercial vernacular landscape and how we may use that language to better communicate with our audience. In other words, he turned low culture into high culture, put the post before modern so to speak, and in the process permanently changed the visual palette of architecture and, soon thereafter, graphic design.

Venturi was also keen to point out, throughout his book, that this was a study of "method not content," and that it was only one aspect of the "architect's broader synthetic tasks." In this spirit, of considering our "overall" responsibilities as image makers and self-proclaimed cultural mediators, and with the experience of Las Vegas fresh in our minds, I thought it worthwhile to focus on the other side of the coin — the down side of a visually stimulating, out-of-control, manufactured environment.

"Las Vegas Versus Nature," published within these pages, looks at these issues. Written by Mike Davis in 1998, the article points out what it means to live in a place like Las Vegas and what impact its commercialism and no-limits architectural development has on its environment.

The text is presented here in the form of a type specimen. It is a long tradition within the world of type foundries to publish classic texts that are in the public domain to showcase typeface designs and layouts. We continue in this vein, but have updated the idea of the copyright-free, classic text, to one that is paid for and urgent.

FURTHER, a few recurring themes can be found in this issue. After Andreas Lauhoff's Speech-recognizing Letterforms project in *Emigre 51*, here we publish another radical typographic experiment played out nearly 150 years ago by no one less than Mormon prophet Brigham Young. The Deseret Alphabet, a font that would easily fit in any contemporary experimental typography publication, was commissioned by Young in the 1850s. It must have been an exciting time when a person could actually think it possible to reform the written English language. Young thought it possible in 1850. What it looked like, and how it fared, can be seen within these pages.

We also continue with Elliott Earls's series of portraits titled Gangsters and Their Effect on My Soul. Earls, who in my mind is one of the most original voices within design today, is also one of the few artists who has been able to seamlessly meld together music, design, video, spoken word and live performance art into a complete visual/verbal theater for which there exists no classification as of yet. These portraits are only a portion of his wide range of talents.

Also present is the work of Bob Dahlquist. His haiku-like type poems, which usually litter his Sacramento house in various stages of (dis)assemblage, found their way onto these pages in a completed form presented as a visual documentary designed and art-directed by Dahlquist himself.

From Holland comes the work of the Experimental JetSet, who give us a deadpan rundown on the World of Money as we approach the year 2000. And Ryan McGinness, after recently publishing the critically acclaimed book flatnessisgod, presents selfsameness, a series of pages exploiting his own persona. RVDL

THE READERS REPLY TO FIRST THINGS FIRST MANIFESTO 2000

FINALLY

Hey! I may not be some high-end, famous designer, or even that decent a designer, but I'm still a designer. I think you oughta make the "First Things First" manifesto signable by as many of us as possible, not just the few you listed, cuz I've been waiting for some sort of declaration like this actually coming from the design world itself...

DAVE MOSSO, COSTA MESA, CA, INTERNET

LESS IS MORE 2000 OR WHO NEEDS "DESIGN"?

The recent multiple publishings of the "First Things First" manifesto 2000 came as no surprise to me. We're now at the turn of the millennium, and the heady days of "graphic agitation" that preceded it have drawn to a close. Through the typographic radicalism of the recent past, graphic designers got it all out of their systems. On top of it, the digital revolution that stimulated all that agitation saw us through unprecedented shifts as the democratization of design wrested graphic control out of our (professional) hands. The end isn't just near. It's upon us. Witness Rudy VanderLans' goodbye-ish preface to the 1964 "First Things First" manifesto reprinted in *Emigre* 49: "There are no significant debates happening in graphic design today."

Sobriety and reflection seem in order.

Despite the earnest, well-intentioned renewal of the manifesto — an attempt to kick-start design in the new millennium — I remain skeptical. The redeclaration itself signifies how little design's self-image has changed. A significant portion of the design profession continues to prove, year-in and year-out, its apparent inability to engage in complex critical topics — an inability displayed in the lack of self-critique that characterizes the very profession and all its official organs. Witness the homogeneous profusion of design magazines, how-to books, conferences, professional organizations, annuals, and awards through which it publicizes and sustains itself. This describes the discursive space of design — the institutional delimiters that define our profession.

Yes, "there are pursuits more worthy of our problem-solving skills [than advertising and marketing]." Yes, "unprecedented environmental, social and cultural crises demand our attention." Yes, "many cultural interventions, social marketing campaigns, books, magazines, exhibitions, educational tools, television programs, films, charitable causes and other information design projects urgently require our expertise and help." Or do they?

Recently, I was reading a progressive political magazine, Z, and couldn't help but notice how "badly" designed it was — a desktop-

published venture. But as soon as I caught myself recoiling (albeit slightly) from its appearance, I recognized how irrelevant professional graphic design was to Z's identity and to its editors and audience. As a hypothetical exercise, I tried to envision how I might remake the magazine, but all my imaginings recast it in a professional light completely antithetical to its spirit. This experience illuminated the limitations of my own initial response and the extent to which I've been viscerally programmed to respond predictably to graphic conventions. Z is just fine as it is, I concluded. The identity crisis isn't in the magazine. It's in me.

Perhaps, increasingly, graphic design is less the solution and more the problem. This is the squeamish possibility graphic designers avoid confronting, because in so doing, the profession risks undoing itself. This is the threat posed by any rigorous discursive critique. And graphic designers are as seduced as their clients and public by design's hype (not to mention its reassuring income-earning possibilities).

If graphic design is to begin resituating itself as a cultural practice, this is where the conversation needs to begin: right at home. How inextricably linked is professional design to corporate agendas, and what are those agendas? Is anything besides optical pyrotechnics (read: "eye candy") at work within recent history's award-winning designs? Do we perpetuate stereotypes through our techniques of representation? Does graphic design simply propagate the *lingua franca* of media "production values" or is it (are we) capable of constituting more complex messages and meanings?

Are we committed to grappling with these difficult questions? As many have already pointed out, designers tend to retreat from the political implications of such queries. They respond instead by personalizing their work as expressive counter-strategies to corporate hegemony and the neutral anonymity of "information." But as far as I can tell, this just results in the next round of "radical" design, or even worse, bad "art" — solipsistic, overindulgent, and critically uninformed.

VanderLans's claim that now there's "nothing that you can really sink your teeth into" was intended as a challenge. Obviously, there's a lot. But is the profession up to it? I'm wary. Design's cultural location precludes the vantage points that would afford insight. Those who've glimpsed through the occasional peepholes are going elsewhere (if they haven't already), seeking new opportunities for visual critique and radical cultural practice. I suspect these renegades have always been around, but most designers are too busy patting themselves (and each other) on the back to notice critical alternatives. Design's officialdom can scarcely acknowledge those designers who quietly and unsensationally solve their clients' hard problems in earnest. The work isn't glamorous, clever, hip, or sexy enough to garner much notice.

When design is able to recognize the relativity of its own cultural condition and to look beyond it, the profession will begin to come to terms with its limitations and the potentials that reside elsewhere. For all the talk about design's ubiquitous power, design professionals remain strikingly uninformed and self-absorbed.

A salient example: I didn't notice any response from the graphic

design community to Thomas Frank's recent critique of Tibor Kalman (Artforum, February 1999), in a review of Perverse Optimist, a compendium of Kalman's work. While I'm as much a fan as anyone, Frank's incisive review succinctly noted the limitations inherent in Kalman's critical position as a designer. Beneath the clever sophistication is a startling naiveté: "What Kalman overlooks is that it is not simply a fluke that a 'radical' like him has become one of the most sought-after architects of the corporate facade... That business allows 'radicals' to do its graphic design is not the inexplicable exception, the 'crack in the wall' that Kalman believes to be such an opportunity for disruption; it is the rule." The design community has always been too busy idolizing Kalman to subject his work to serious critique, and that is even less likely to happen now, with Kalman's untimely death. It took a cultural critic to point out the shortcomings of his work. In light of Frank's observations, it is even more ironic that Kalman inspired the reinvocation of the manifesto in the first place. (I guess designers don't read Artforum, much less Z.)

In closing, I call on the manifesto's signers (and all its adherents) to take a close hard look at the cultural location of your own work. If you're serious about your claims, take apart everything you ever thought you knew about what you're doing. Set out in uncharted territory. But if you do, if you really do, something tells me you'll no longer recognize what you're doing as design. Because that will no longer be quite what it is. For this new work, as a new kind of practice, will need a new name.

And we don't know what to call it yet.

LORETTA STAPLES, UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN,

SCHOOL OF ART & DESIGN, ANN ARBOR, MI, INTERNET

GOOD NEEDS BAD

While much of design's dialogue this past decade has centered on the relative merits of one mode of visual expression over another, it seems clear we have only recently begun to understand that the real debate lies elsewhere. Mr. Poynor's introductory essay in Emigre 51 provides an excellent starting point.

It is telling that so many designers consider themselves simultaneously powerful "...designers are engaged in nothing less than the manufacture of contemporary reality" and powerless "We have absorbed design so deeply into ourselves that we no longer recognize the myriad ways in which it prompts, cajoles, disturbs and excites us." In trying to make sense of it all, easy answers readily lend themselves, from blaming "the brandmeisters and marketing gurus" who manipulate design, to shrouding design's "alchemical" effect on us in an air of mystery.

As with most debates of this scale, complexity is often oversimplified. Sympathizers with "First Things First" are as likely to establish a new mode of design practice as commodification is likely to kill the expression of those who wish to overcome it. Good needs bad if for no other reason than to define itself.

What is hopeful about this debate is not whether commodification will be ended (in time it will probably be displaced by something else, just as other forms of social organization have come and

gone) or whether thinking individuals will conquer the mindless mob (as long as commodification exists they will both exist), but whether the terms of our debate may yet rise above the exclusivity of a visual fashion show (arguing the stylistic merits of modernism, postmodernism, and whatever's next) to one of broader substance: What do we want to say?

DENNIS MABRY, INTERNET

A CALL TO ARMS AGAINST FUTURE RETRO-MANIFESTOES FROM THE DISILLUSIONED

We, the undersigned, are citizen-consumers. We also happen to be graphic designers, art-directors and visual communicators who have been raised in a world in which the techniques and apparatus of museum signage and bus time tables have persistently been presented to us as the most effective and desirable use of our talents. Many design teachers and mentors promote this belief; the market rewards it; a tide of books and publications reinforces it.

But snide comments aside.

Design is encased in capitalism, and even though there are many brownie points to be won for the individual through the creation of coffee-table books, high-brow exhibitions and niche magazines, this link will persist.

Unfortunately for the politically conscious, the all-pervasive economic mentality measures success only by rise in consumption, which we all know is bad for the planet even though we can't keep our hands off that new brand of sugared cereal that we ourselves helped sell.

Every sector of commerce is embroiled in this problem, but few of the professionals engaged in them choose to see their field as the prime motivator behind it. The rise in consumption is not about graphic design; it is about capitalism channeling fear and greed. It is not your fault, but if you really feel you need to do something about the situation, your 500Mhz G4 Mac will not take you there — molotov cocktails will.

The omnipresence of design is not due to its inherent potential, but rather lent it by the powerful machinations of advertising and marketing. Therein lies the only challenge. The definition of design will never be changed by individuals turning away from the discipline, but rather by the choices and negotiations they enter into when creating commercial art. It is our belief that only by injecting milligrams of what we hold at heart into the very mainstream of popular culture is there any real hope of changing it into something else.

And what should this "else" be?

Much of the dumbing down in the media results from an attitude of superiority; from communication professionals talking down to the citizen-consumers they despise, but continue to make their living out of. The instant we start to treat the people at the business end of our messages as our peers, we have an opportunity to enter into valuable dialogue with them, challenging the preconceptions of meaning and of the fabric that contains the messages. All this and more: In Ads!

And hey, if we should lay down our collective mice and never do a biscuit box again, the citizen-consumers would have to do it for themselves, and there's no telling what the world would look like.

EVEN WESTVANG, MEDIENOPERATŒRE, OSLO

TOM ELSNER & HILLA NESKE, ARTIFICIAL ENVIRONMENTS, LONDON

INTERNET

DESIGNING IS NOT A POLITICAL ACT

On first reading the "First Things First" manifesto 2000, we were a little bemused by both its subject and conclusions. After the first pass it seemed that the designers who had signed the manifesto were dissatisfied with their lot and were pleading for more demanding and socially useful work. On further reading it became clear that they were not actually referring to themselves at all, as on reflection they get the pick of the projects. When was the last time anyone on the list (many of them our valued friends and colleagues) stooped to apply their skills to selling butt-toner?

The arguments in the manifesto are underpinned by a sneering and puritanical view of designers' association with such products as light beers, cigarettes and 4x4 vehicles. For those of us who don't share the signatories' problem with products that many see as the essentials of life, would they care to be more explicit about what exactly there is to worry about? Even if the signatories think drinking is wrong, what right have they got to preach its evils? And even if it were a problem, do they consider that design has the power to stop us drinking? At best, an advertising campaign might influence a change of brand, but it won't start us drinking beer if we don't already.

We share a dislike of the often crass results of the marketisation of everyday life, extending from invasive advertising to sponsored weather forecasts, and from Pay TV to libraries being replaced by Barnes & Noble. We are also clear that this trend is driven by the widely held belief that there is no alternative to the market (currently running at fever pitch) combined with the decline of the welfare state. To hold designers culpable for these social and economic forces is laughable. The mistake that is all too often made by politically concerned designers is to equate social and political problems with design solutions, when in fact only design problems have design solutions.

There are indeed many areas where design could make a remarkable difference to our lives. Many of these are listed in the manifesto, but it is not made clear how they might actually be addressed, only that they should be. The most significant area the manifesto ignores is design for the Internet. This new discipline is open for us to investigate and shape, and many designers (though not enough) have risen to this challenge. As this magazine goes to press, "Advance for Design" is being launched at the AIGA annual conference with a mission to create "a new community of design practitioners who are challenged to design for a world that is increasingly digital and connected."

As socially committed designers who have given our time in recent years to anti-war and pro-choice campaigns, we have learned two lessons. The first is the need for freedom of speech and expression: what is ethical to one designer may be abhorrent to another. The second is the importance of differentiating between paid and unpaid work. When giving their time to a project, as opposed to being paid for it, a designer is free to pick and chose those projects. With paid work it is a very different scenario. While many designers treat it as a vocation, being a designer is actually just a job, like being a printer or an accountant. How, we wonder, would the signatories react if their printer refused to work on one of their design projects because they disagreed with it, or their accountant refused to audit their books because they disapproved of the projects the designer had worked on?

Back in 1964 when the original "First Things First" manifesto was launched, the argument that the public was being fooled by the relatively new mass media of advertising had some merit. To make the same argument today implies a sadly low opinion of the public's intelligence and inflates the influence of designers by mystifying their power to beguile. Far from duping the public, the advertising industry is now paranoid about being ignored by media-savvy consumers.

There can be no such thing as radical design without a radical sociopolitical context. What follows from this is that socially and politically committed designers should focus their energies in those spheres, while concentrating on creating great design for design's sake during their working day. They should develop a clear political analysis that backs up their slogans, whether they are concerned about the environment and over-consumption, or Western military adventures. Who you work for and what projects you end up working on is largely a career and not a political issue.

If being radical is your thing, engage with and act on some truly radical ideas and don't get hung up about your day job.

NICO MACDONALD AND KEVIN MCCULLAGH, DESIGN AGENDA, ENGLAND

FIRST THINGS FIRST - WHAT WERE YOU THINKING?

It is true that Advertising has been presented to us as the most lucrative use of our talents. It is not seen as the most effective nor desirable use of our talents, apart from becoming richer. Those in the Advertising industry can hardly argue that there is something other than money that motivates their career, though there are sure to be those who have convinced themselves otherwise. F. Scott Fitzgerald said: "Advertising is a racket, like the brokerage business. You cannot be honest without admitting that its constructive contribution to humanity is exactly minus zero." Graphic designers do take part in an indirect form of advertising; packaging and branding do participate in influencing the consumer. But there is a line to be drawn between Advertising and Graphic Design, which you haven't made clear, or don't wish to — I can't tell.

What you also haven't done is explain in a concise manner what it is you propose — because proposing "a reversal of priorities in favor of more useful, lasting and democratic forms of communication," is not saying much, just alienating a vast public reading your message. You're hiding behind big words. G.K. Chesterton said: "long words go rattling by us like long railways trains. We know they are carrying thousands [or maybe 33] who are too tired or too

indolent to walk and think for themselves." I mean, what the heck do you mean by "a new kind of meaning?" Can Milton Glaser tell me? How about Erik Spiekermann? A phrase like that is meant to get us "excited about the project" by being mystical and romantic, but it's crap.

Maybe Rick Poynor can tell me. He says in his article that "The product may be little different in real terms from its rivals. What seduces us is its 'image.'" It is not merely the design or image of a product that contributes to our perception and feeling of it. I drink Coke because it tastes better than Pepsi. Design or image sell only so much, it's the quality of the product that makes people come back (North Face clothing and Mag-lite flashlights are great examples). Alan H. Meyer said: "The best ad is a good product." The common sense of the American public will guarantee that no one will buy a Honda based on their lame ad campaign, but only because it's a good car. If it was all about image I'd never eat at Carl's Jr. again . . . and to the guys who promote Alero, please stop!

Rick mentions that "design was in danger of forgetting its responsibility to struggle for a better life for all." Design has never had a responsibility to struggle for a better life for all. An easier one, sure. Life is not better because we can quickly understand a subway map or a nutrition label, just as life is not better because of technological advances like the subway or microwave — life is only made easier.

Design as communication and design as persuasion is mentioned, but what about design as expression? Where does Tomato, Charles Wilkin, CSA Design, and Imaginary Forces belong (even Rudy and his desert images)? The vision of a designer that Kinneir talks of can be found in the work of Massimo Vignelli, and the results are sterile, void of any passion and movement.

It is also mentioned that "Design's love affair with form to the exclusion of almost everything else lies at the heart of the problem." What lies at the heart of the problem has more to do with irresponsible marketing departments relying on polls, statistics, and other abstract and ambiguous methods of measuring public opinion, and the designers and advertisers who depend on such strategies. I repeat . . . to the guys who promote Alero, stop!

You've given us a manifesto that is nothing more than a political pipe dream, full of brash accusations, not too much thought, yet much imagination. You're looking to get us excited about your magazine again, because there hasn't been much excitement the last few issues. And for the cover to carry such political urgency, what the heck do articles like Speech-recognizing Letterforms have to contribute to your political crusade? Speech-recognize this word: crap.

GARY WILLIAMS II, PASADENA, CA

REPLY

As a signatory of the "First Things First 2000" manifesto, I'd like to explain why I signed (and published) the manifesto.

To me, the "First Things First" manifesto is inspirational and encouraging. It tells me there are many design professionals who have social standards that influence whom they choose to work for and what kind of work they do. The manifesto's aim is not to hold designers culpable for the world's social and economic problems. On the contrary, it sees designers as having real potential to help cure its ills and make this world a better place. This may be too ideological a notion for those who believe that "stooping to apply your skills to sell butt-toner" is what graphic design is all about, and who see no alternative to the commercialization of everyday life. But to others, who try to integrate their social beliefs with their careers, the goal to improve things for all is simply one of the responsibilities of life.

You can ridicule the language of the manifesto, or make yourself feel better by saying that design and advertising have limited powers and shift the responsibility to your marketing departments, or you can dismiss the whole effort simply as a cheap way for Emigre to get some attention. But those tactics, it seems to me, evade the question at the heart of the manifesto; "What are you doing, in your professional life, to make this world a better place for all?" Obviously, there are no simple answers. True, the manifesto only suggests in broad, ambiguous terms what can be done to put our talents to better use. But much can be done, there is ample room for improvement, and it's up to each of us to figure out how to best accomplish this.

RUDY VANDERLANS

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Mrs. Eaves A Type Specimen

A family of fonts designed by Zuzana Licko, here used in a reprint of

LAS VEGAS versus NATURE an article written by Mike Davis

From Reopening the American West, edited by Hal K. Rothman.

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LAYOUT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY RUDY VANDERLANS



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IT WAS ADVERTISED AS THE BIGGEST non-nuclear explosion in Nevada's history. On October 27, 1993, Steve Wynn, the state's official "god of hospitality," flashed his trademark smile and pushed the detonator button. As 200,000 Las Vegans cheered, the Dunes Hotel, former flagship of the Strip, slowly crumbled to the desert floor. The giant dust plume was visible from the California border.

Nobody in Nevada found it the least bit strange that Wynn's gift to the city that he so adores was to blow up an important piece of its past. This was simply urban renewal Vegas-style: one costly facade destroyed to make way for another. Indeed, the destruction of the Dunes merely encouraged other corporate casino owners to blow up their obsolete properties with equal fanfare: the Sands, of Rat Pack fame, came down in November 1996, while the Hacienda was dynamited at the stroke of midnight on New Year's Eve. Extravagant demolitions have become Las Vegas's version of civic festivals.

In place of the old Dunes, Wynn's Mirage Resorts is completing the \$1.25 billion Bellagio, a super-resort with lakes large enough for jet-skiing, created using water that came from the allotments of the original Dunes golf course. Wynn's purchase of the Dunes solved his problem, but not that of other developers of resorts. Impresario Sheldon Adelson, who is building the \$2 billion, 6,000-room Venetian Casino Resort on the site of the Sands, with gondolas along artificial canals, has not explained where his water will come from; neither has Circus Circus Enterprises, which is transforming the old Hacienda into Project Paradise, "an ancient forbidden city on a lush tropical island with Hawaiian-style waves and a swim-up shark exhibit."

In the five years since Wynn blew up the Dunes, \$8 billion has been invested in thirteen major properties along the Strip alone. As a result, the Sphinx now shares an adjacent street address with the Statue of Liberty, the Eiffel Tower, Treasure Island, the Land of Oz, and, soon, the Piazza San Marco. And the boom, still breaking all records in 1997, shows every sign of continuing. 2

BY OBSCURE COINCIDENCE, the demolition of the Dunes followed close on the centenary of Frederick Jackson Turner's legendary "end of the frontier" address to the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, where the young prairie historian meditated famously on the fate of American character in a conquered and rapidly urbanizing West. Turner questioned the survival of frontier democracy in the emergent epoch of giant cities and trusts (not to mention Coney Island and movies) and wondered what the West would be like a century hence.

Steve Wynn and the other robber barons of the Strip think they know the answer: Las Vegas is the terminus of western history, the end of the trail. As an overpowering cultural artifact it bestrides the gateway to the twenty first century in the same way that Burnham's "White City" along the Chicago lake front was supposed to prefigure the twentieth century. At the edge of the millennium, this strange amalgam of boomtown, world's fair, and highway robbery is the fastest growing metropolitan area in the United States. (It is also, as we shall see, the abrightest star in the neon firmament of postmodernism.)

More than 30 million tourists had their pockets picked by its onearm bandits and crap tables in 1996: a staggering 33 percent increase since 1990. (By the time you read this, Vegas should be hard on the heels of Orlando, Florida, which is, with 35 million visitors to Walt Disney World and Universal-MGM Studios, the world's premiere tourist destination.) While southern California has suffered through its worst recession since the 1930s, Las Vegas has generated tens of thousands of new jobs in construction, gaming, security, and related services. As a consequence, nearly a thousand new residents, half of them Californians, arrive each week.

Some of the immigrants are downwardly mobile blue

by locals—desperately seeking a new start in the Vegas boom. Others are affluent retirees headed straight for a gated suburb in what they imagine is a golden sanctuary from the urban turmoil of Los Angeles. Increasing numbers are young Latinos, the new bone and sinew of the casino-and-hotel economy. In spring 1995, Clark County's population passed the one million mark, and anxious demographers predicted that it will grow by another million before 2010.4

THE EXPLOSIVE, and largely unforeseen, growth of southern Nevada has dramatically accelerated the environmental deterioration of the American Southwest. Las Vegas long ago outstripped its own natural-resource infrastructure, and its ecological "footprint" now covers all of southern Nevada and adjacent parts of California and Arizona. The hydrofetishism of Steve Wynn (he once proposed turning downtown's Fremont Street into a pseudo-Venetian Grand Canal) sets the standard for Las Vegans' prodigal overconsumption of water: 360 gallons daily per capita versus 211 in Los Angeles, 160 in Tucson, and 110 in Oakland. In a desert basin that receives only 7-8 inches of annual rainfall, irrigation of lawns and golf courses (60 percent of Las Vegas's total water consumption) - not to mention artificial lakes and lagoons - adds the equivalent of another 20 to 30 inches of rainfall per acre. 5

Yet southern Nevada has little water capital to squander. As Johnny-come-lately to the Colorado Basin water wars, it has to sip Lake Mead through the smallest straw. At the same time, reckless groundwater overdrafts in Las Vegas Valley are producing widespread and costly subsidence of the city's foundations. The Strip, for example, is several feet lower today than in 1960, and sections of some subdivisions have had to be abandoned.

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Natural aridity dictates a fastidiously conservative water ethic. Tucson, after all, has prospered on a reduced water ration: its residents actually seem to prefer having cactus instead of Bermuda grass in their front yards. But Las Vegas haughtily disdains to live within its means. Instead, it is aggressively turning its profligacy into environmental terrorism against its neighbors. "Give us your water, or we will die," developers demand of politicians grown fat on campaign contributions from the gaming industry. Las Vegas is currently pursuing two longterm and fundamentally imperialist strategies for expanding its water resources.

M KE DAVIS

First, the Southern Nevada Water Authority is threatening to divert water from the Virgin River (a picturesque tributary of the Colorado with headwaters in Zion National Park) or steal it from ranchers in sparsely populated central Nevada. In 1989 the Authority (then called the Las Vegas Valley Water District) stunned rural Nevadans by filing claims on more than 800,000 acre-feet of surface- and groundwater rights in White Pine, Nye, and Lincoln Counties. 7

This infamous water grab ("cooperative water project" in official parlance) brought together an unprecedented coalition of rural Nevadans: ranchers, miners, farmers, the Moapa Band of Paiutes, and environmental groups. Their battle cry has been "Remember the Owens Valley," in reference to Los Angeles's notorious annexation of water rights in the once-lush valley on the eastern flank of the Sierra Nevada: an act of environmental piracy immortalized in the film Chinatown. Angry residents of the Owens Valley blew up sections of the Los Angeles Aqueduct during the 1920s, and some central Nevadans have threatened to do the same

to any pipeline hijacking local water to Las Vegas. 8

Since 1966, the Authority, without abandoning its legal claims to central Nevada water, has put more emphasis on withdrawing Virgin River water directly from its terminus in Lake Mead. This conforms to its second, and more important, strategy of increasing Las Vegas's withdrawal of Colorado River water stored in Lake Mead or in downstream reservoirs. To circumvent the status quo of the Colorado River Compact, the Authority has teamed up with the powerful Metropolitan Water District of southern California in what most observers believe is the first phase of a major water war in the Southwest.

Las Vegas and the Los Angeles area want to restructure the allocation of Colorado River water away from agriculture and toward their respective metropolitan regions. In most scenarios, this involves a raid on Arizona's allotment, and Arizona's governor, J. Fife Symington III, retaliated by allying himself with water managers in San Diego and the Imperial Valley.*

* Major players in this anti Metropolitan Water District coalition also include the billionaire Bass brothers from Fort Worth, who have bought up tens of thousands of acres of choice agricultural land in the El Centro area in order to sell their federally subsidized water allotments to San Diego 9



Las Vegas haughtily disdains to live within its means. Instead, it is aggressively

TURNING ITS PROFLIGACY INTO ENVIRONMENTAL TERRORISM AGAINST ITS NEIGHBORS.

THROUGH ONE OR ANOTHER of these machiavellian gambits, the Authority's general manager, Pat Mulroy, has assured the gaming industry that Clark County will have plenty of water for continued breakneck growth over the next generation. Independent water experts, however, have criticized Mulroy's optimistic projections, and one of them, Hal Furman, caused a small sensation in February 1997 with his assertion that "southern Nevada will run dry shortly after the turn of the century." In the event of such a crisis, Las Vegas's last resort probably would be "to help subsidize the costly process of desalting Pacific Ocean water in exchange for some of California's Colorado Rivershare." This, however, would almost certainly double the current, artificially low, acre-foot cost of water. 10

Compounding the problem of future water supply is the emergent crisis of water quality in Lake Mead, which operates as both reservoir and wastewater sink for Las Vegas. Federal researchers in 1997 discovered that "female egg protein in blood plasma samples of male carp" was causing widespread reproductive deformation in the fish. This catastrophic endocrine disruption, with potential human genetic impact as well, is likely related to the large amounts of toxic waste, especially pesticides and industrial chemicals, that are discharged into the lake. 11

In 1994, moreover, thirty-seven people, mostly with AIDS, died as a result of a lethal protozoan, Cryptosporidium parvum,

that experts from the national Centers for Disease Control surmised was carried in tap water drawn from Lake Mead. Public health researchers have become alarmed by the coincidence of these two outbreaks at a time when hyper- growth is overwhelming regional water and waste treatment capabilities. As one biologist recently asked on the op-ed page of the Las Vegas Review-Journal, "Will more people die from Cryptosporidium contamination of our drinking water when we put more wastewater back in the lake?" 12

Finally, to return to yet another Chinatown parallel, watchdog groups such as the Nevada Seniors Coalition and the Sierra Club are increasingly concerned that the Southern Nevada Water Authority's \$1.7 billion water delivery system from Lake Mead, currently under construction, may be irrigating huge speculative real-estate profits along metropolitan Las Vegas's undeveloped edge. For example, one major pipeline (the so-called South Valley Lateral) runs through an area near the suburb of Henderson where private investors recently acquired huge parcels in a complicated land swap with the Bureau of Land Management, which controls most of Las Vegas's desert periphery. This is the same equation - undervalued land plus publicly subsidized water-that made instant millions for an "inside syndicate" when the Los Angeles Aqueduct was brought to the arid San Fernando Valley in 1913.13

Southern Nevada is as thirsty for fossil fuels as it is for water. Most tourists naturally imagine that the world's most famous nocturnal light show is plugged directly into the turbines of nearby Hoover Dam. In fact, most of the dam's output is exported to southern California. Electricity for the Strip, as well as for the two million lights of downtown Las Vegas's new (and disconcerting) "Fremont Street Experience," is primarily provided by coal-burning and pollution-spewing plants on the Moapa Indian Reservation northeast of the city, and along the Colorado River. Only four percent of Las Vegas's current electrical consumption comes from "clean" hydropower. Cheap power for the gaming industry, moreover, is directly subsidized by higher rates for residential consumers. 14

11

Automobiles are the other side of the fossil fuel problem. As Clark County's transportation director testified in 1996, the county has the "lowest vehicle occupancy rate in the country" in tandem with the "longest per person, per trip, per day ratio." Consequently the number of days with unhealthy air quality is dramatically increasing. Like Phoenix and Los Angeles before it, Las Vegas was once a mecca for those seeking the restorative powers of pure desert air. Now, according to the Environmental Protection Agency, Las Vegas has supplanted New York as the city with the fifth highest number of days with "unhealthy air" (as measured from 1991 to 1995). Its smog already contributes to the ochre shroud over the Grand Canyon and is beginning to reduce visibility in California's new East Mojave National Recreation Area as well." 15

Las Vegas, moreover, is a major base camp for the panzer divisions of motorized toys – dune buggies, dirt bikes, speed boats, jet-skis, and the like – that each weekend make war on the fragile desert environment. Few western landscapes, as a result, are more degraded than the lower Colorado River Valley, which is under relentless, three-pronged attack by the leisure classes of southern Nevada, Phoenix, and southern California.

In the blast-furnace heat of the Colorado River's Big Bend, Las Vegas's own demon seed, Laughlin, has germinated kudzulike into an important gambling center. Skyscraper casinos and luxury condos share the west bank with the mega-polluting Mojave Power Plant, which devours coal slurry pumped with water stolen from Hopi mesas hundreds of miles to the east. Directly across the river, sprawling and violent Mojave County, Arizona - comprising Bullhead City and Kingman - provides trailer-park housing for Laughlin's nonunion, minimum-wage workforce, as well as a breeding ground for anti-government militias. (It was here that Timothy McVeigh worked as a security guard while incubating his Turner Diary fantasies of Aryan vengeance.)

THE LAS VEGAS miracle, IN OTHER WORDS,

demonstrates the fanatical persistence of an environmentally and socially bankrupt system of human settlement and it confirms Edward Abbey's worst nightmares about the emergence of an apocalyptic urbanism in the Southwest. Although postmodern philosophers (who don't have to live there) delight in the Strip's "virtuality" or "hyperreality," most of Clark County is stamped from a monotonously real and familiar mold. Las Vegas, in essence, is a hyperbolic Los Angeles – the Land of Sunshine on fast-forward.

THE HISTORICAL TEMPLATE for all low-density, resource intensive southwestern cities was the great expansion of the 1920s that brought two million midwesterners and their automobiles to Los Angeles County. This was the "Ur" boom that defined the Sunbelt. Despite the warnings of an entire generation of planners and environmentalists chastened by the 1920s boom, regional planning and open space conservation again fell by the wayside during the post 1945 population explosion in southern California. In a famous article for Fortune magazine in 1958, sociologist William Whyte described how "flying from Los Angeles to San Bernardino an unnerving lesson in man's infinite capacity to mess up his environment — the traveler can see a legion of bulldozers gnawing into the last remaining tract of green between two cities." He baptized this insidious growth form "urban sprawl." is

Although Las Vegas's third-generation sprawl incorporates some innovations (casino-anchored shopping centers, for example), it otherwise recapitulates, with robotlike fidelity, the seven deadly sins of Los Angeles and its Sumbelt clones such as Phoenix and Orange County. Las Vegas has

I. abdicated a responsible water ethic; 2. fragmented local government and subordinated it to private corporate planning; 3. produced a negligible amount of usable public space, 4. abjured the use of "hazard zoning" to mitigate natural disaster and conserve landscape; 5. dispersed land uses over an enormous, unnecessary area; 6. embraced the resulting dictatorship of the automobile; and 7. tolerated extreme social and, especially, racial inequality. 17

In Mediterranean California or the desert Southwest, water use is the most obvious measure of the environmental efficiency of the built environment. Accepting the constraint of local watersheds and groundwater reservoirs is a powerful stimulus to good urban design. It focuses social ingenuity on problems of resource conservation, fosters more compact and efficient settlement patterns, and generates respect for the native landscape. In a nutshell, it makes for "smart" urbanism (as seen in modern Israel, or the classical city-states of Andalucia and the Maghreb), with a bias toward continual economies in resource consumption. 18

Southern California in the early Cîtrus era, when water recycling was at a premium, was a laboratory of environmental innovation, as evinced by such inventions as the bungalow (with its energy efficient use of shade and insulation), solar heating systems (widespread until the 1920s), and state-of-the-art sewage and wastewater recovery technologies. Its departure from the path of water rectifude, and thus smart urbanism, began with the Owens Valley aqueduct and culminated in the 1940s with the arrival of cheap, federally subsidized water from the Colorado River. Hoover Dam extended the suburban frontier deep into southern California's inland basins and in the process underpriced traditional water conservation practices such as sewer-farming and stormwater recovery out of existence.

WNLIKE LOS ANGELES, Las Vegas has never practiced water conservation or environmental design on any large scale. It was born dumb. Cheap water has allowed it to exorcise even the most residual semiotic allusion to its actual historical and environmental roots. Visitors to the contemporary Stnp, with its tropical islands and Manhattan skylines, will search in vain for any reference to the Wild West (whether dude ranches or raunchy saloons) that themed the first-generation casinos of the Bugsy Siegel era. The desert, moreover, has lost all positive presence as landscape or habitat; it is merely the dark, brooding backdrop for the neon Babel being created by Wynn and his competitors.

Water profligacy likewise dissolves many of the traditional bonds of common citizenship. Los Angeles County is notorious for its profusion of special-interest governments—"phantom cities," "county islands," and geographical tax shelters—all designed to concentrate land use and fiscal powers in the hands of special interests. Clark County, however, manages to exceed even Los Angeles in its radical dilution and dispersal of public authority.

The Las Vegas city limits, for example, encompass barely one-third of the metropolitan population (versus nearly half in the city of Los Angeles). The major regional assets—the Strip, the Convention Center, McCarran International Airport, and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV)—

are located in an unincorporated township aptly named Paradise, while poverty, unemployment, and homelessness are disproportionately concentrated within the boundaries of the cities of Las Vegas and North Las Vegas.

This is a political geography diabolically conceived to separate tax resources from regional social needs. Huge, sprawling county electoral districts weaken the power of minorities and working-class voters. Unincorporation, conversely, centralizes land-use decision making in the hands of an invisible government of gaming corporations and giant residential and commercial-strip developers.

In particular, the billion-dollar corporate investments along the Strip — with their huge social costs in terms of traffic congestion, water and power consumption, housing, and schools — force the fiscally malnourished public sector to play constant catch-up. This structural asymmetry in power between the gaming corporations and local government is most dramatically expressed in the financing of the new public infrastructures to accommodate casino expansion and the growth of tourism. A classic example is the Southern Nevada Water Authority's new water distribution system, whose bonds are guaranteed by sales taxes—the most regressive means available, but the only significant source of undesignated state revenue in Nevada. 19

13

"public choice" theory, corporate-controlled economic develop ment within a marketplace of weak, competing local governments is inherently inefficient. Consider, for example, the enormous empty squares in the urbanized fabric of Las Vegas, dramatically visible from the air, that epitomize the leapfrog pattern of development that planners have denounced for generations in southern California because it unnecessarily raises the costs of streets, utilities, and schools. Crucial habitat for humans (in the form of parks), as well as for endangered species such as the desert tortoise, is destroyed for the sake of vacant lots and suburban desolation.

Similarly, both Los Angeles and Las Vegas zealously cultivate the image of infinite opportunity for fun in the sun. In reality, however, free recreation is more accessible in older eastern and midwestern cities that cherish their parks and public landscapes. As long ago as 1909, experts were warning Los Angeles's leaders about the region's looming shortage of parks and public beaches. Although the beach crisis was partially ameliorated in the 1950s, Los Angeles remains the most park-poor of major American cities, with only one third the usable per capita open space of New York City. 20

Las Vegas, meanwhile, has virtually no commons at all: just a skinflint I.4 acres per thousand residents, compared with the recommended national minimum of 10 acres. This park shortage

may mean little to the tourist jet-skiing across Lake Mead or lounging by the pool at the Murage, but it defines an impoverished quality of life for thousands of low-wage service workers who live in the stucco tenements that line the side streets of the Strip. Boosters' claims about hundreds of thousands of acres of choice recreational land in Clark County refer to cartrip destinations, not open space within walking distance of homes and schools. One is not a substitute for the other. 21

Some of the most beautiful desert areas near Las Vegas, moreover, are now imperiled by rampant urbanization. Developers are attempting to raise land values by privatizing natural amenities as landscape capital. The local chapter of the Sierra Club, for example, has recently mobilized against the encroachment of Summerlin West, a segment of the giant Summerlin planned community that is the chief legacy of Howard Hughes, upon Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area - native Las Vegans' favorite site for weekend hikes and picnics. The project, as endorsed by the Las Vegas Cîty Council (which was subsequently allowed to annex the development), encompasses 20,000 homes, two casinos, five golf courses, and nearly 6 million square feet of office and commercial space. As one local paper put it, most environmental activists were "less [than] enthused about the possibility of lining one end of Red Rock Canyon, one of the valley's most pristine landmarks, with casinos, businesses and homes." 22

The recreation crisis in Sunbelt cities

is the flip side of the failure to preserve native ecosystems, another consequence of which is the loss of protection from natural hazards such as floods and fires. The linkage between these issues is part of a lost legacy of urban environmentalism espoused by planners and landscape architects during the City Beautiful era. In 1930, for example, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., the greatest city designer of his generation, recommended "hazard zoning" to Los Angeles County as the best strategy for reducing the social costs of inevitable floods, wildfires, and earthquakes. In his sadly unrealized vision, development would have been prohibited in floodplains and fire-prone foothills. These terrains, he argued, were best suited for preservation as multipurpose greenbelts and wilderness parks, with the specific goal of increasing outdoor recreational opportunities for poorer citizens. 23

Las Vegas is everything Olmsted abhorred. Its artificial deserts of concrete and asphalt, for example, have greatly exacerbated its summer flash-flood problem (probably the city's best-kept secret, except on occasions, as in 1992, when unsuspecting tourists drown in casino parking lots). Like Los Angeles, Clark County has preferred to use federal subsidies to transform its natural hydrology (the valley literally tilts toward the Colorado River) into an expensive and failure-prone plumbing system rather than use zoning to exclude development from the arroyos and washes that should have become desert equivalents to Olmsted's greenbelts. (The recent declaration of a desert wetlands park in the Las Vegas Wash riparian corridor 15 a belated half-measure.) 24

Los Angeles was the first world metropolis to be decisively shaped the era of its greatest growth by the automobile. One result was the decentralization of shopping and culture and the steady atrophy of its downtown district. Recently a group of theorists at the University of California at Irvine have suggested that we are seeing in Orange County, and other "edge cities," the birth of a "postsuburban metropolis" where traditional central-place functions (culture and sports, government, high-end shopping, and corporate administration) are radically dispersed among different centers. 25

Whether or not this is truly a general tendency, contemporary Las Vegas recapitulates Orange County in an extreme form. The gaming industry has irresistibly displaced other civic activities, with the partial exception of government and law, from the center to the periphery. Tourism and poverty now occupy the geographical core of the metropolis. Other traditional downtown features, such as shopping areas, cultural complexes, and business headquarters, are chaotically strewn across Las Vegas Valley with the apparent logic of a plane wreck.

Meanwhile its booming suburbs stubbornly reject physical and social integration with the rest of the city. To use the nomenclature of the futuristic movie Blade Runner, they are self-contained "off worlds," prizing their security and social exclusivity above all else. Planning historian William Fulton has recently described suburban Las Vegas as a "back to the future" version of 1950s southern California: "It is no wonder that the Los Angeles homebuilders love Las Vegas. Not only can they tap into a Los Angeles style market with Los Angeles-style products, but they can do things the way they used to do them in the good old days in L.A." As Fulton points out, while southern California homebuilders must now pay part of the costs of the new schools and water systems, Vegas developers "pay absolutely no fees toward new infrastructure." 26



THE MOST AMBITIOUS of Las Vegas's "off worlds" is Summerlin. Jointly developed by Summa and Del Webb corporations, and named after one of Howard Hughes's grandmothers, it boasts of complete self sufficiency (it's "a world within itself," according to one billboard slogan) with its own shopping centers, golf courses, hospitals, retirement community, and, of course, casinos. "Our goal is a total community," explains Summerlin president Mark Fine, "with a master plan embracing a unique lifestyle where one can live, work, and play in a safe and aesthetic environment." (Residents rather than the corporations pay for key infrastructural investments, such as the new expressway from Las Vegas, through special assessment districts.) When Summerlin is finally completed in the early twenty first century, a population of more than 200,000 living in twenty-six income— and age—differentiated "villages" will be hermetically sealed in Las Vegas's own up-scale version of Arizona's leaky Biosphere. 27

The formerly gritty mill town of Henderson, southeast of the Strip, has also become a major growth pole for walled, middle-income subdivisions, and it is becoming Nevada's second-largest city. (For optimal advantage in its utility and tax obligations, Summerlin is divided between the city of Las Vegas and unincorporated Clark County.) On the edge of Henderson is the larval Xanadu of Lake Las Vegas: a Wynnian fantasy created by erecting an eighteen story dam across Las Vegas Wash. "The largest privately funded development under construction in North America," according to a 1995 brochure. Lake Las Vegas (controlled by the ubiquitous Bass brothers of Fort Worth) is sheer hyperbole, including \$2 million lakefront villas in a private gated subdivision within a larger guard-gated residential community. The Basses' grand plan envisions the construction of six major resorts, anchored by luxury hotels and

casinos, as well as five world-class golf courses, in addition to "restaurants and retail shops that will be the upscale alternative for Las Vegas." 28

Las Vegas's centrifugal urban structure, with such gravitationally powerful edge cities as Summerlin and Henderson-Lake Las Vegas, reinforces a slavish dependence upon the automobile. According to trendy architectural theorists such as Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown, whose Learning from Las Vegas has been a founding text of postmodernism, Las Vegas Boulevard is supposed to be the apotheosis of car-defined urbanism, the mother of strips. Yet the boom of the last decade has made the Strip itself almost impassable. Las Vegas Boulevard is usually as gridlocked as the San Diego Freeway at rush hour, and its intersection with Tropicana Road is supposedly the busiest street corner in the nation. 29

As a result, frustrated tourists soon discover that the ride from McCarran Airport (immediately adjacent to the Strip) to their hotel frequently takes longer than the plane flight from Los Angeles. The Brobdingnagian scale of the properties and the savage summer heat, not to mention the constant assault by hawkers of sex-for-sale broad sheets, can turn pedestrian expeditions into ordeals for the elderly and families with children. The absence of coherent planning for the Strip as a whole (the inescapable consequence of giving the gaming corporations total control over the development of their sites) has led to a series of desperate, patchwork solutions, including a few new pedestrian overpasses. In the main, however, the Nevada Resort Association — representing the major gaming corporations — is relying on new freeways and arterials to divert cross-traffic from the Strip and a proposed \$1.2 billion monoral to speed customers between the larger casino-hotels.

16

FOR MOST OF THE 1990S, contemporary Las Vegas has been one vast freeway construction site. Nothing has been learned from the dismal California experience, not even the elementary lesson that freeways increase sprawl and consequently the demand for additional freeways. When completed, the new Las Vegas freeway network will allow most local commuters to bypass the Strip entirely, but it will also centrifuge population growth farther into the desert, with correspondingly high social costs for infrastructure and schools.

MEANWHILE, THE NEVADA RESORT ASSOCIATION has concentrated its overwhelming political clout to ensure that a proposed increase in the 8 percent hotel room tax is spent exclusively on its own Resort Corridor Transportation Master Plan (the monorail). Having engineered the financing of the new water delivery system with regressive sales tax increases, the gaming industry has opposed all efforts by desperate Clark County School District officials to divert part of the room tax increase to school construction. As in previous tax fights, school and welfare advocates are strictly outnumbered by the resort association's hired guns. Nevada is the most notoriously antitax state in the country, and gaming industry lobbyists, their coffers swollen with the profits of the boom, dominate the legislature in Carson City. The recent flood of retirees to Las Vegas's suburbs has only reinforced the antitax majority. (Paradoxically, the Clark County electorate is aging, while the actual median age of the population – thanks especially to young Latino immigrants and their families-is declining.) 30

One index of the extraordinary power wielded by the resort association is the fact that the relative contribution of gaming taxes to state revenue actually declined during the annus mirabilis of 1995 when hotel casino construction broke all records. Yet the industry, shaken by the local "Rodney King" riots in spring 1992, is not unconscious that eroding education quality and social services will eventually produce social pathologies that may undermine the city's resort atmosphere. Their calculated solution, after months of toplevel discussion in the winter of 1996-97, has been to volunteer the room tax increase – which is directly passed on to tourists and then spent exclusively on the Strip monorail — as a "heroic" act of social responsibility. This reduced the tax heat on the casino owners while conveying the clear message, scripted by resort association lobbyists, that the time had come for homebuilders and small. business owners to make a contribution to school finance. As columnist John Smith pointed out, "By coming out first, they shift the focus away from a potential gaming revenue tax increase Lwhich would come out of their pockets and raise the question of responsibility of Southern Nevada's developers and shopkeepers."31

In the meantime, the previous decade's hypergrowth without counterpart social spending has increased economic inequality throughout Clark County. Despite the feverish boom, the supply of jobless immigrants has far outpaced the demand for new workers in the unionized core of the gaming economy. The difference translates into a growing population of marginal workers trapped in minimum-wage service jobs, the nonunion gaming sector, the sex industry, and the drug economy. According to one estimate, Las Vegas's homeless population increased 750 percent during the superheated boom years of 1990-1995. At the same time, a larger percentage of Las Vegans lack health insurance than the inhabitants of any other major city. Likewise, southern Nevada is plagued by soaring rates of violent crime, child abuse, mental illness, lung cancer, epidemic illness, suicide, and what no one wants to talk about — a compulsive gambling problem that is a major factor in family pathologies. 32

This obviously provides a poor setting for the assimilation of Las Vegas's new ethnic and racial diversity. Despite consent decrees and strong support for affirmative action from the Culinary Workers Union, the gaming industry remains far from achieving racial or gender equality in hiring and promotions. In the past, Las Vegas more than earned its reputation as "Mississippi West." While African-American entertainers such as Sammy Davis, Jr., and Nat King Cole were capitalizing the Strip with their talent, blacks were barred from most hotels and casinos, except as maids, through the 1960s. Indeed, a comparative study during that period of residential discrimination across the United States found that Las Vegas was the "most segregated city in the notion." 33

More recently, persistent high unemployment rates in the predominantly black Westside precipitated four violent weekends of rioting following the Rodney King verdict in April 1992. Interethnic tensions, exacerbated by a relatively shrinking public sector, have also increased as Latinos have replaced African-Americans as the valley's largest minority group. Indeed, black leaders have warned of "creeping Miamization" because some casino owners prefer hiring Latino immigrants instead of local blacks. Latinos, for their part, point to overcrowded schools (Latinos now constitute 40 percent of the elementary school population in the city of Las Vegas), police brutality, and lack of representation in local government. 34

Nevada is the most notoriously antitax state in the country, and gaming industry lobbyists, their coffers swollen with the profits of the boom, dominate the legislature in Carson City.

Let's return, once again, to Las Vegas and the end of western history.

In his apocalyptic potboiler, The Stand (1992), Stephen King envisioned Las Vegas as Satan's earthly capital, with the Evil One literally enthroned in the MGM Grand. Many environmentalists, together with the imperiled small-town populations of Las Vegas's desert hinterlands, would probably agree with this characterization of the Glitterdome's diabolical zeitgeist. No other city in the American West seems to be as driven by occult forces or as unresponsive to social or natural constraints. Like Los Angeles, Las Vegas seems headed for some kind of eschatological crack-up (in the King novel, Satan ultimately nukes himself).

Confronted with the Devil himself, and his inexorable plan for two-million-plus Las Vegans, what can the environmental community do? The strategic choices are necessarily limited. On one hand, environmentalists can continue to defend natural resources and wilderness areas one at a time against the juggernaut of development: a purely defensive course that may win some individual victories but is guaranteed to lose the larger war. On the other hand, they can oppose development at the source by fighting for a moratorium on further population growth in the arid Southwest. Pursued abstractly, however, this dogmatic option will only pigeonhole Greens as enemies of jobs and labor unions. Indeed, on the margins, some environmentalists may even lose themselves in the Malthusian blind alley of border control, by allying themselves with nativist groups that want to deport hardworking Latino immigrants whose per capita consumption of resources is only a small fraction of that of their native-born employers.

A better approach, even if utopian in the shortor medium-run, would focus comprehensively on the character of desert urbanization. "Carrying capacity," after all, is not just a linear function of population and the available resource base; it is also determined by the social form of consumption, and that is ultimately a question of urban design. Cities have incredible, if largely untapped, capacities for the efficient use of scarce natural resources. Above all, they have the potential to counterpose public affluence (great libraries, parks, museums, and so on) as a real alternative to privatized consumerism, and thus cut through the apparent contradiction between improving standards of living and accepting the limits imposed by ecosystems and finite natural resources.

In this perspective, the most damning indictment against the Sunbelt city is the atrophy of classical urban (and pro-environmental) qualities such as residential density, pedestrian scale, mass tran-

sit, and a wealth of public landscapes. Instead, Los Angeles and its postmodern clones are stupefied by the ready availability of artificially cheap water, power, and land. Bad design, moreover, has unforeseen environmental consequences, as illustrated by southern Nevada's colossal consumption of electric power. Instead of mitigating its desert climate through creative design (e.g., proper orientation of buildings, maximum use of shade, minimization of heat-absorbing "hardscape," and so on), Las Vegas, like Phoenix, simply relies on universal air-conditioning. But, thanks to the law of the conservation of energy, the waste heat is merely exported into the general urban environment. As a result, Las Vegas is a scorching "heat island" whose nightly temperatures are frequently 5 to 10 degrees hotter than the surrounding desert.

Fortunately, embattled western environmentalists have some new allies. In their crusade for the New Urbanism, Peter Calthorpe, Andreas Duany, and other young, environmentally conscious architects have reestablished a critical dialogue between urban designers and mainstream environmental groups, particularly the Sierra Club. They have sketched, with admirable clarity, a regional planning model that cogently links issues of social equity (economically diverse residential areas, recreational equality, greater housing affordability through elimination of the need for second cars, and a preferential pedestrian landscape for children and seniors) with highpriority environmental concerns (on-site recycling of waste products, greenbelts, integrity of wetland ecosystems, wildlife corridors, and so on). They offer, in effect, elements of a powerful program for uniting otherwise disparate constituencies – inner-city residents, senior citizens, advocates of children, environmentalists - all of whom are fundamentally disadvantaged by the suburban, automobile-dominated city.

The New Urbanism has had many small successes in northern and central California, the Pacific Northwest, and other areas where preservation of environmental quality commands a majority electoral constituency. In the Southwest, by contrast, the Summerlin model—with its extreme segregation of land uses and income groups, as well as its slavish dependence upon cheap water and energy—remains the "best practice" standard of the building industry. (Only Tucson, with its selfimposed environmental discipline, constitutes a regional exception.) The West, in other words, is polarizing between housing markets where the New Urbanism has made an impact and those where 1960s southern California templates remain hegemonic. In the case of Las Vegas, where the contradictions of hypergrowth and inflexible resource demand are most acute, the need for an alternative settlement model has become doubly urgent.



The New Urbanism by itself is a starting point, not a panacea. A Green politics for the urban desert would equally have to assimilate and synthesize decades of international research on human habitats in drylands environments. It would also have to consider the possible alternatives to a regional economy that has become fatally dependent upon a casinotheme park monoculture. And it would need to understand that its major ally in the long march toward social and environmental justice must be the same labor movement (particularly the progressive wing represented by unions such as the Las Vegas Culinary Workers) that today regards local environmental activists with barely disguised contempt. These are the new labors of Hercules.

Creating a vision of an alternative urbanism, sustainable and democratic, in the Southwest is an extraordinary challenge. But this may be the *last* generation even given the opportunity to try.

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- . Davis How Eden Lost It's Carden

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- 2 Robert Parker, THE SOCIAL COSTS OF RAPID URBANIZATION IN SOUTHERN NEVADA in Davis and Rothman Crit beneath the Cliffer
- Mike Duvis Radial Gauedron in Las Vegas The Nation 6 July 1992

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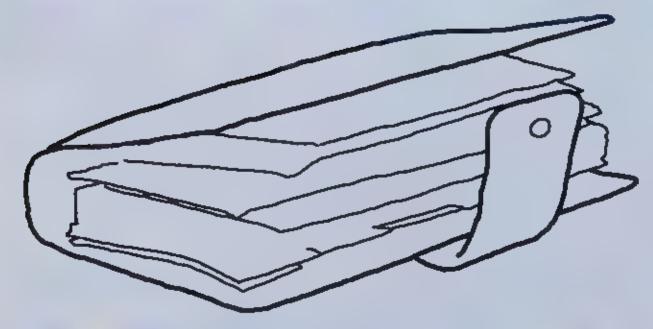
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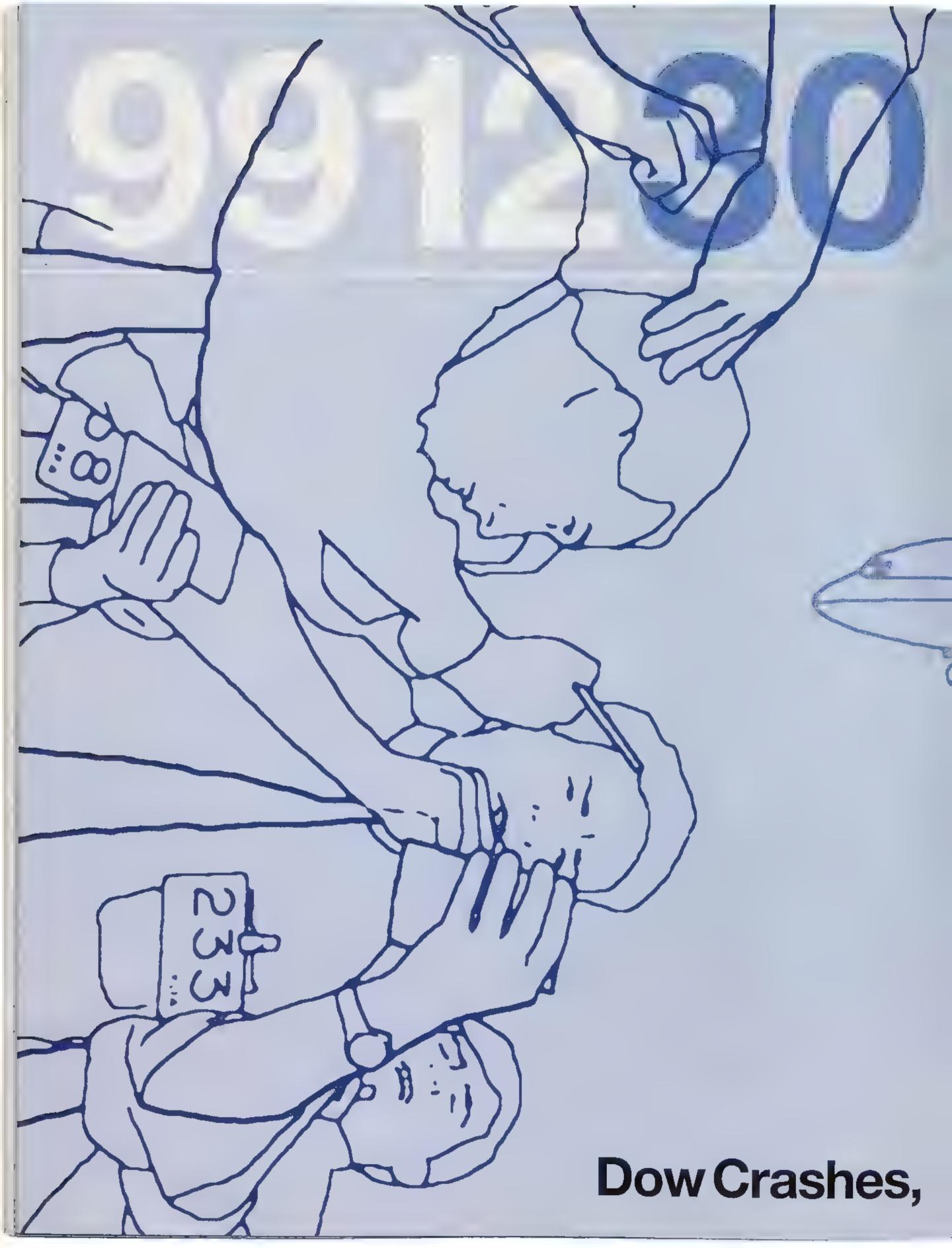
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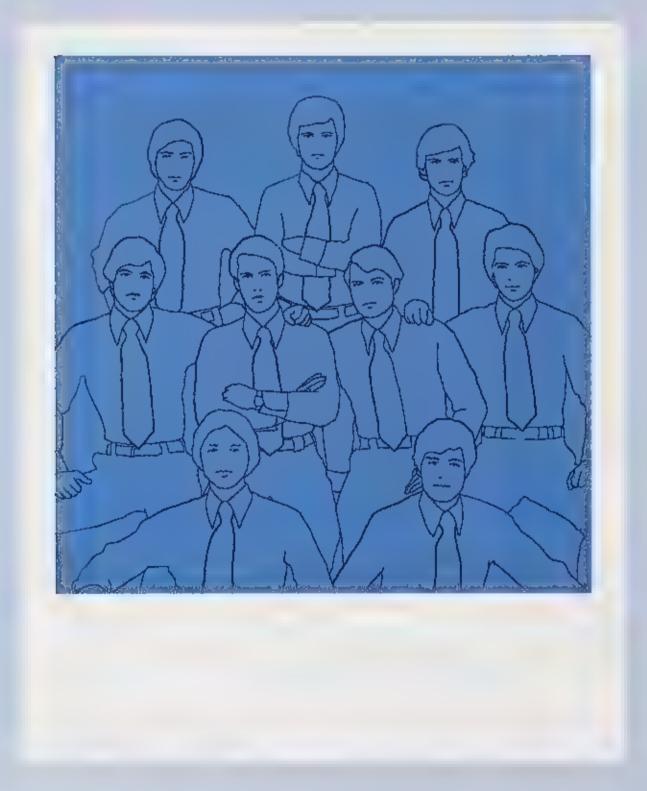
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For success, then, let me give you one simple piece of advice beyond all others. Every day, year in and year out, each man should ask himself, over and over again, two questions. First, 'What is the name of the man I am now working for?' and having answered this definitely, then, 'What does this man want me to do, right now?'

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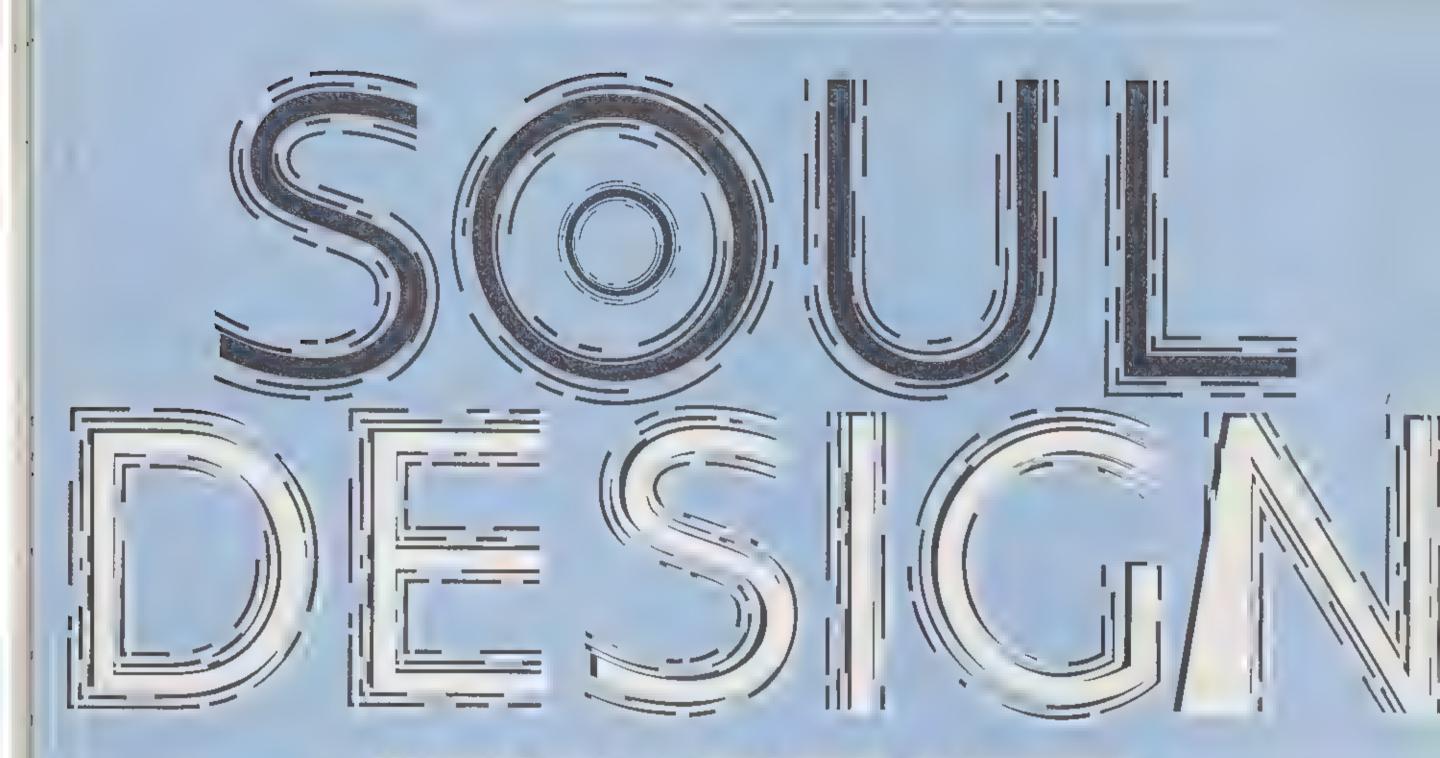
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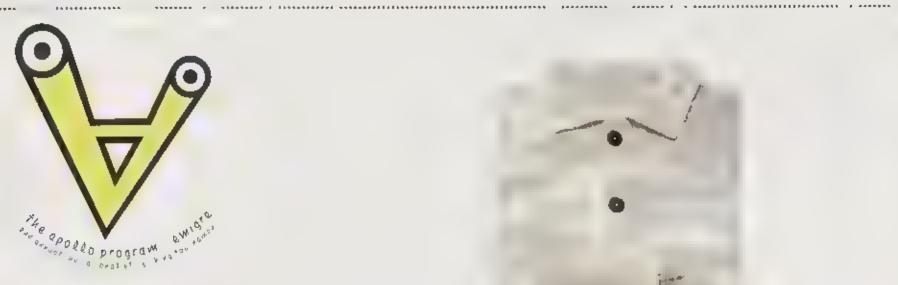
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1 EMIGRE 50!

Think Ink, 1999.

Designer Shawn Wolfe and writer Darick Chamberlin give us an overview of BeatKit, a company Wolfe started in the early 80s. Elliott Peter Earls of The Apollo Program renders a series of highly subjective portraits of his all-time heroes. Two new Emigre typefaces are introduced: Cholla, designed by Sibylle Hagmann, and Vendetta, a new series of Venetian old style printing types designed by John Dawner. Bill Gubbins invites us to his home for a hilarious chat about printing inks. And Martin Venezky, art director of San Francisco's cult tab Speak, presents his Cranbrook thesis, "Notes on the West," a visual odyssey dealing with the iconography of the Old West \$7.95 reg. price; \$4.00 per issue when buying 3 or more!



EMIGRE 45

Untitled, 1998.

This issue features interviews with members of the Dutch graphic design team LUST, who discuss their form-follows-process approach to graphic design, and Peter Maybury, the Dublin-based designer for cultural institutions such as Cade magazine, the Douglas Hyde gallery and the Dublin French Film Festival. Also, Chuck Byrne looks at the experimental typographic print work of San Francisco-based letterpress printer and designer Jack Stauffacher, while Andrew Blauvelt, in his essay "Head to Hand," does a "deep reading" of the book designs of Lorraine Wild, the Los Angeles-based designer, writer, critic and educator

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EMIGRE 49

The Everything is for Sale Issue, 1999.

In 1964, graphic designer Ken Garland and 21 colleagues issued the "First Things First" manifesto. It was a call to arms for graphic designers; an encouragement, as Garland put it, "to think about the apportunities for graphic design and photography outside advertising." "First Things First" reminds us that there are alternatives, so we have reprinted it here, and built an entire issue around it. Articles by Thomas Frank (The Baffler), Carrie McLaren (Stay Free!), Jonathan Dee (Harper's), Kalle Lasn (Adbusters), and Kevin Fentan. Also interviews with Kalle Lasn and Chris Dixon, respectively the editor and art director of Adbusters magazine.

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EMIGRE 44

Design as Content, 1997.

Emigre no.44 takes an in depth look at design book publishing by reviewing four books published in 1997; G1: New Dimensions in Graphic Design, a selection of graphic design work from around the world compiled by Neville Brody and Lewis Blackwell; Pure Fuel, authored by the London-based design group Fuel, Ray Gun — Out of Control, a celebration of the magazines published by Marvin Scott Jarrett, and Mind Grenades: Manifestas from the Future, reprints of the opening spreads from Wired magazine Essays by Diane Gromala, Kenneth FitzGerald, Shawn Wolfe, Bill Gubbins and Rudy VanderLans.

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EMIGRE 48

Untitled II. 1998.

Mother Jones magazine decided to upgrade their image in 1998 and Emigre gets the inside scoop on the politics of the redesign from art director Rhonda Rubinstein. Then, graphic designer Stuart Bailey allows us a peek behind the scenes in the creation of the "Werkplaats Typografie," a brand new experimental graduate design program based in Arnhem, Holland. Also, Kenneth FitzGerald, in his essay "Skilling Saws and Absorbent Catalogs," points out how art and design have come to rely on each other, and how graphic designers may learn from the symbiosis. Also, enclosed as a special 32-page type specimen booklet, is A Brief History of Type Design at The Apollo Program, produced and designed by Elliott Peter Earls.

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EMIGRE 43

Designers are People Tao, 1997.

Jeffery Keedy lets it rip in "Greasing the Wheels of Capitalism with Style and Taste or the 'Professionalization' of Graphic Design in America," while Denise Gonzales-Crisp looks at what designers (can) do to circumvent the traditional and often compromising client/designer relationship. Teal Triggs and Sian Cook, of the London-based Wamen's Design + Research Unit, revisit the seemingly unchanged role of women as both subjects and objects in graphic design. And Rudy Vanderlans takes a closer look at type as intellectual property. Includes pull-out poster introducing Zuzana Licko's new typeface family Base Monospace

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EMIGRE 47

Relocating Design, 1998.

Jeffery Keedy, in "Graphic Design in the Postmodern Era," points out the general willingness of designers to have their "values and ideals be dictated by the commercial marketplace." And in her article "The Macrame of Resistance," Lorraine Wild suggests ways to "salvage graphic design in the face of the juggernaut of technology and the demands of the market." Also, an interview with Michael Shea who discusses the disconnect that exists between theory and practice, and the maker and reader, in graphic design. Plus more.



EMIGRE 41

The Magazine Issue, 1997.

When it comes to magazines, which ones do we remember best, and what is it that makes them so memorable? This is the question we posed to Martin Venezky, Nancy Bonnell-Kangas, Daniel X O'Neil, Denise Gonzales Crisp, and Kenneth FitzGerald. Also contains a 32-page facsimile of the (possibly fictional) magazine project entitled The News of the Whirled, by Kenneth FitzGerald

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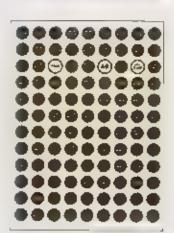
EMIGRE 46

Fanzines and the Culture of D.I.Y., 1998.

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As more and more designers start their own magazines and become initiators of graphic products, instead of solving "problems" for others, we thought it might be inspirational to take a look at the world of fanzines and other graphic Do-It-Yourself projects. Teal Triggs gives us a history of the British fanzine, while Bill Gubbins, does his take on their US counterpart. Ella Cross, picks her favorite zines, and Daniel X. O'Neil delivers nothing less than a glimpse of the future of fanzines. Plus, the inside story of Heckler, a zine gone big time and back. Plus much, much more.

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EMIGRE 40

The Info Perplex, 1996.

Edited by Andrew Blauvelt

Andrew Blauvelt looks at the hybrid and mutable nature of the information event and asks "Where is the pleasure in information design?"

Teal Triggs meets John Warwicker of the London-based collective Tomato.

Diane Gromala examines the relationships among the body, design, and the impact of technology. Anne Burdick reviews Jay David Bolter's book Writing Space. Frances Butler takes a historical look at the structures and spaces devised for holding and shaping meaning.

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EMIGRE 39

Graphic Design and the Next Big Thing, 1996

Lorraine Wild gives an overview of graphic design education and the way it is currently being challenged by new media. Kenneth FitzGerald, reviews Elliott Earls's CD Throwing Apples at the Sun. Putch Tu discusses geeks, freaks, cyborgs, blenders, power tools, remote controls, and other nervous machines, and how it all relates to graphic design. Carl Francis DiSalvo reviews Avital Ronell's The Telephone Book. Paul Roberts lends us his insights as writers bemoon loss of authorial control. Diane Gromala reviews Sven Birkerts's book The Gutenberg Elegies.

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EMIGRE 37

Joint Venture, 1996.

This issue is about collaboration, writing, intellectual property, entrepreneurialism, poetry, authorship, self-publishing, reading and everything else that design is made of, but this time we look at it from the perspective of a group of artists that includes two writers, one graphic designer and one visual artist. Anne Burdick interviews Stephen Forcell and Steve Tomosula. Rudy VanderLans talks with Daniel X. O'Neil and Marc Nagtzaam

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EMIGRE 36

Mouthpiece 2, 1995.

Edited and art directed by Anne Burdick. Louise Sandhaus conducts a verbal/visual exploration of the digital essay. Brian Schorn introduces OULIPO (the workshop of potential literature). Anne Bush writes about the history of the critic. Stuart McKee explores the relationship between writing and community formation. Felix Janssens extals the need to reconsider the form of the book. Gerard Mermoz investigates the functions of text as they are given typographic form. And much more...

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EMIGRE 35

Mouthpiece, 1995.

Edited and art directed by Anne Burdick. This issue presents an eclectic mix of voices discussing what happens when the worlds of writing and design coincide. Featuring Johanna Drucker on the future of writing. Adriano Pedrosa and Michael Worthington discuss the birth of the designer as auteur. Andrew Blauvelt and Joans Spadaro challenge the primacy of the verbal. Kevin Mount provides excerpts from imaginary books, and Denise Gonzales Crisp discusses the book Looking Closer

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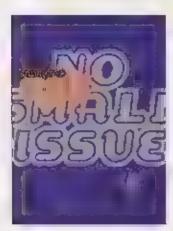


EMIGRE 34

The Rebirth of Design, 1995.

Andrew Blauvelt, Putch Tu and Victor Margolin each take an in depth look at Dan Friedman's book Radical Modernism. Anne Burdick and Lauise Sandhaus review Robin Kinross's books Modern Typography and Fellow Readers. Jeffery Keedy explores the relationship between grophic design and Modernist ideologies. Rudy VanderLans panders the commodification of graphic design experiments. Mott Owens gives us a design student's look at the contemporary state of graphic design

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EMIGRE 33

No Small Issue, 1995.

Andrew Blauvelt offers us Part 2 of his essay "In and Around" Cultures of Design and the Design of Cultures." Steven Heller gives us a sober analysis of the New Design Discourse in his article "Design is Hell." Toronto writer and self-described "typography Queen" Joe Clark answers the question whether the influence of the text-based art of Barbara Kruger and Jenny Holzer on the mainstream has made pop culture richer. And, Mr. Keedy traveled to London to interview Rick Poynor, the founder and former editor of Eye magazine

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EMIGRE 32

Essays, Texts and Other Writings about Graphic Design, 1994.

This issue focuses on graphic design as a significant force within culture, politics and society. Writings include essays by Dutch philosopher and design critic Hugues C. Boekraad, design critic and teacher Andrew Blauvelt, type designer Zuzana Licko, and others.

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EMIGRE 31

Raising Voices, 1994.

How to create a design curriculum that would sufficiently prepare a design student for life after school, as we move into the next millennium, is a hotly debated topic. This issue hopes to uncover what it is that makes the four featured young design educators tick, and how they each deal with the complexities and challenges of teaching. It features teachers from a variety of schools: Drane Gromala, a Yale graduate teaching at the University of Texas; Koli Nikitas, a CalArts graduate teaching at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago; Michael Rock, a RISD graduate teaching at Yole and Andrew Blauvelt, a Cranbrook graduate teaching at North Carolina State

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EMIGRE 30

Fallout, 1994.

Steven Heller's article "The Cult of the Ugly," which was published in the British design magazine Eye, received more response than any other article published in Eye. It hit a nerve with its readers and subsequently created an intellectual followt of sorts that cast quite a shadow. For this issue of Emigre, Michael Dooley traveled to New York to meet and interview Heller, one of America's most prolific graphic design critics, to talk about the Eye article and other topics concerning graphic design. In addition Dooley spoke with Edward Fella, Jeffery Keedy and David Shields, three designers whose work was among the pieces selected by Eye as exemplary of "Ugly" \$7.95 reg. price; \$4.00 per issue when buying 3 or more!



EMIGRE 28

Broadcast, 1993.

Edited and designed by Gail Swanfund. This Cal Arts graduate talks with her pals about life after design school. Featuring fellow grads Sue LaPorte, Barbara Glauber and Somi Kim (ReVerb), as well as an interview with the current art director at The Walker Art Center, Laurie Haycock Makela This issue is proof that there are living designers who find real life applications for their grad school design experiments without compromising personal preference

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EMIGRE 26

All Fired Up, 1993

Celebrating its 10th year of publication, with issue 26 Emigre continues to highlight the experimental spirit that larks within the field of graphic design. Featuring an in-depth interview with THIRST'S Rick Valicents, an overview of the stellar typeface production of Italian designer Aldo Novarese, articles on white space as "an appropriated formula; a code of acknowledged good taste," copyrights and much more \$7.95 reg. price; \$4 00 per issue when buying 3 or more!



EMIGRE 22

Here we focus on the work of London-based graphic designer and teacher Nick Bell Introducing two new conceptual typefaces. One is Zelig "a typeface with the uncanny chameleon-like ability to change its appearance to something very similar to whatever typeface it is placed next to" and Psycho "... a typeface defined more by its use, than by the design and consistency of each of its individual units." Psycho will be presented as a special insert which was hand-produced by Nick Bell and his students at The London College of Printing. An in-depth interview with Nick Bell will accompany and elucidate a sampling of briefs he created for his teaching at The London College of Printing \$7.95 reg. price; \$4.00 per issue when buying 3 or more!



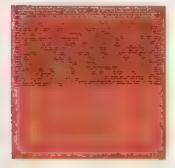
EMIGRE 21

New Faces, 1992 Edited by Jeffery Keedy

Featured in this issue is the work of graduate and under graduate graphic design students at California Institute of the Arts in Valencia, California Because we are always interested in what the future of graphic design might bring, every once in a while Emigre focuses on a particular design school whose work we feel might have an impact on the development of design. This issue consists of actual school assignments whose mechanical parameters were slightly altered to fit the page size and printing restrictions of Emigre magazine

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BY DESIGNERS, FOR DESIGNERS

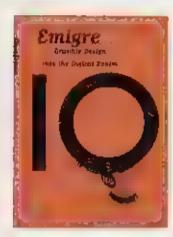


EMIGRE (EXHIBITION CATALOG)

Edited and designed by Emigre. Published by Drukkerij Rosbeek by.

In February 1998 Emigre received the Charles Nypels Award, an award which is assigned once every two years to an individual or institution that has made significant innovations in the area of typography. On the occassion of this event on exhibition of the work of Emigre was held at the Jon van Eyck Academy in Maastricht, Holland, and an accompanying catalog was published and printed by Drukkerij Rosbeek bv. The catalog, which was designed and compiled by Emigre, features essays by Rick Poynor and Lorraine Wild, a selection of quotes from back issues, as well as samples of Emigre's layouts and typefaces

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EMIGRE (THE BOOK): GRAPHIC DESIGN INTO THE DIGITAL REALM

Edited and designed by Emigre. Published by Van Nostrand Reinhold In 1984 Emigre magazine set out to explore the as-yet-untapped and uncharted possibilities of Macintosh-generated graphic design. Boldly new and different, Emigre broke rules, opened eyes and earned its creators, Rudy VanderLans and Zuxana Licko, cult status in the world of graphic design. 96 Pages, 11 x 15 inches, softcover, over 300 illustrations, with commentary from VanderLans and Licko. Essay by Mr. Keedy.

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LOOKING CLOSER 2: CRITICAL WRITINGS ON GRAPHIC DESIGN Edited by Michael Bierut, William Drenttel, Steven Heller and DK Holland. Published by Allworth Press. Co-published with the AIGA.

Looking Closer 2 addresses the issues that have sparked discourse and discord over the past two years. And like the first, the second volume serves as an ad hoc textbook of graphic design criticism. Featuring commentaries, manifestaes, reviews, editorials, and reportage by, among others, Robin Kinross, Tibar Kalman, Ellen Lupton, Katherine McCoy, Véronique Vienne, Zuzana Licko, Rick Poynor, J. Abbott Miller, Jon Wozencroft, Ellen Shapiro and Andrew Blauvelt 272 Pages, 6.75 x 10 inches, softcover. \$18.95



PALM DESERT

Published by Emigre

Palm Desert is the first book of photographs by Emigre magazine creator Rudy VanderLans, It is based on the music and lyrics of Las Angeles-based composer Van Dyke Parks and pays tribute to both Parks and Southern California. Somewhere between fact, fantasy and fiction, Palm Desert strives to echo Parks's creative approach of blending classical, historical, vernacular and environmental themes. The result is a curious mix of fan's tribute, documentary photography, impressionism, and experimental music review. Photography and design by Rudy VanderLans Essays by Kenneth FitzGerald and Brian Schorn, Typeface designs by Zuzana Licko, Also includes a bonus music CD containing the original "Palm Desert" recording as well as three loose adaptations by Itchy Pet, Honey Barbara, and Elliott Peter Earls. Playing time: 21 minutes.

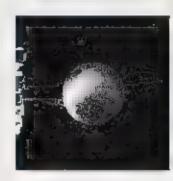
96 pages, 5.5 x 8 5 inches, 75 full color and duotone photographs, cloth cover with blind embass, sewn and case bound, CD attached in back \$24.95



PAUL RAND: AMERICAN MODERNIST

By Jessica Helfand. Published by William Drenttel New York.

This book contains two long critical essays on Paul Rand, arguably the most celebrated American graphic designer of this century. Helfand explores Rand's particular form of modernism and his role in creating the new visual language which revolutionized American design as both an art and a business. Helfand offers fresh insights into Rand's passionate interests in the European avant-garde, his seminal influence on American design education, and the enduring relevance of his work for American corporations, most notably for IBM. This is the first book on Rand since his death in 1996, and brings to light fascinating contradictions that make his legacy all the more distinctive. Designed by William Drenttel and Jeffrey. Tyson Set in Filosofia. 86 Pages, 4.5 x 7 inches, paperback in dust jacket \$12.00



\$38.00

Composed and Recorded by Orangeflux: Kristina Meyer and Matt Fey.

Rust Belt is graphic music; an expression of lyrics, harmonies and rhythms composed with type. Each of the fourteen tracks found on Rust Belt use typefaces created by Grangeflux to complement and communicate lyrical content. Instruments ranged from the classical (ink pen, letter- press, lead rubbings, and rubber stamps) to the more modern (computer, copier, scanner and laser printer). Guest artists include, Steve Gariepy, Patrick Dorey, Sam Meyer and Allen Parmelee. Limited signed and numbered edition. Only 468 copies pressed. The 24 page, visual recording is offset pressed in one color, slipped into a die-cut dust cover, and placed in a 12x12 inch letterpressed, gatefold sleeve. Also included is a 12x36 inch 2-sided, 2-color poster.



AND SHE TOLD 2 FRIENDS

Edited & designed by Kall Nikitas.

This catalog documents an exhibit held at Woman Made Gallery in Chicago, Illinois, in June 1996. And She Told 2 Friends celebrates the female network that exists within the global design community and seeks to acknowledge the link between contributions made by women and the support and admiration that exists among them. By inviting two women to submit work and asking each one to do the same, and so on, this exhibit curated itself Each designer chose their own submission, and provided the text accompanying their work together with their reasons for inviting their two "friends." Includes work by Barbara Glauber, Rebeca Mendez, Denise Gonzales Crisp, Ellen Lupton, Robynne Raye, Lorraine Wild and others. 44 Pages, 9.25 x 13.125 inches, softcover, perfect bound



SIX ESSAYS (+2) ON DESIGN AND NEW MEDIA

By Jessica Helfand. Published by William Drenttel New York.

Jessica Helfand is a designer who writes frequently about the impact of technology on the design professions. These essays, published in an earlier form in Print magazine in 1994 and 1995, examine the impact of design on information technologies, including the role of typography in screen-based media, the function of identity in on-line environments, and the questionable legacy of desktop metaphors in interaction design. Her overriding concern is that the race to provide information on-line neglects the experience - the drame, the emotions, the human connections - in short, the editorial content.

76 Pages, 4 5 x 7 inches, softcover. \$12.00

COMPACT DISKS & CASSETTES



NEW!

SOUL DESIGN

Works by 18 Graphic Designers Curated and analysed by Kali Hillian

Curated and produced by Kali Nikitas

This exhibition and catalog gave designers, who are aften restricted by client abligation, creative freedom and the apportunity to use their skills to communicate something rooted in their own history. Eighteen graphic designers were invited to submit one project-specific piece celebrating someone who has had a profound and meaningful effect on their life Includes work by Allen Hori, Gail Swanland, Jon Jancourt, Mike Kippenhan, Sara Cambridge and others, as well as essays by Arthur Redman and Rob Dewey

40 pages, II x 17 inches, paperback \$15.00



RECENT

EMIGRE MAGAZINE VOLUMES (#33-41 & 42-49)

Published by Emigre.

To celebrate the publication of its 50th issue Emigre put together 100 case bound sets (2 valumes each) containing "The Small Issues Series," Emigre 33 through 49. This collection of 17 issues gives a thorough and indepth overview of the heated debates that raged throughout graphic design in the 1990s. These are also the issues that have won Emigre inclusion in the very first 1.D. Forty, the Chrysler Award for Innovation in Design, The AIGA Gold Medal Award, and the Charles Hypels Award for Excellence in Typography.

This set includes the "collectors" issues Emigre 38 and 42 (Regular price \$58 each), as well as the original type specimen booklets introducing Hypnopaedia and The Apollo Program Font set.

For information about the content of each issue see The Emigre Catalog 99 01 or go to www.emigre.com

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RECENT

50 QUESTIONS 50 ANSWERS

Published by 124/3

This booklet was published on the occasion of "Emigre in Istanbul: An Exhibition of Typographic Design." Featuring a lengthy interview with Emigre's Rudy VanderLans presented in both Turkish and English Produced and designed by Turkish designer Esen Karol 48 pages, 5.75 x 7.875 inches, paperback in dust jacket.

48 pages, 5.75 x 7.875 inches, paperback in dust jacket. \$12.00



RECENT

THE CODEX SERIES (NO.1)

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Somewhere between a compilation CD and a digital fanzine, The Codex Series is a laboratory that explores the digital medium through narrative, design and the interactive. Issue Number One features the work of Josh Ulm, Tree Axis, Orangeflux and Volumeone. "Flashcards" explaining each project's intention and a mini poster are included with each issue.

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Commbine

"Waw! Where did this disc come from? This doesn't sound like starter stuff, destabilizing the grid, jerking the digital clock, Mr. Makela knows how to control the machine by softening those quantized tracks."

Industrial Strength Magazine

"Audioafterbirth is a winning blend of industrial hip-hop, funky bass, and memorable tunes. Imagine an otherworldly mix of Nine Inch Nails, Bootsy, and Cole Porter. In-your-face technology and i&b rarely sound this good together." City Paper, Baltimore

"Complicated pulsating rhythms for the industrial head who wants to play with something hard, raw and exciting, like vibrating industrial fluxed electro-vocals. With a slow, digging bump and grind, this dishes out nasty stuff such as backwards tope vocals and a real tough bass kick. These dangerous musicians chap up and serve you your ears like the best of them."

Industrial Nation

"AudioAfterBirth succeeds best at its basest level — this album rocks. These songs are terrifying examples of what can happen when you allow a pair of naughty punkers with a P-funk sensibility complete access to digital sampling equipment." Rockpool

"Like a more hip-hop version of Captain Beefheart." Option

"Imagine if Trent Rexnor lived in Minneapolis instead of Cleveland, was less angry, more obscure, and 4AD put out his record. Got it? Meet P. Scott Makela and AudioAfterBirth's debut, Commbine "Trip CD 510.00 Cassette \$5.00



BASEHEAD

Play With Toys

"Michael Ivey's fragile melodies and quavering vocals create a quiet sadness that's never been heard in rap before; the result is one of the bleakest expressions of African-American angst since Sly and the Family Stone's 'There's a Riot Goin On.'" Details

"Play With Toys sounds like it was recorded with only a fistful of dollars and a 40-cunce, rendering sad the sonic grandeur of many high-budget blowhards." Spin

"Every once in a great while, a recording comes out of thin air, without the fanfare of hype, and simply blows our socks off. Truly the find of the year, Basehead inhabits a shadowy, domp alcove you'll want to curl up in again and again." (M)

"Most arresting album of '91." Pulse

"This is hip-hop wiping the rules of identity off the chalkboard and loading up a new program. For me, that's the best that pop music can offer."

The Village Voice

"Play With Toys is a concept album that ties rock, funk, blues and honkytonk to rap, presenting a cut-and-paste style that should make many citizens of the now formula-oriented hip-hop nation blush." Rolling Stone Cassette \$5.00



BINARY RACE

Fits and Starts

'By way of description, imagine a more accessible Negativeland with the production skills of Trevor Horn. In other words it's very danceable, tricky, smart and superbly recorded. All tracks are recommended, but you may want to start with 'Ready', 'Say' and the Yoko Ono meets the Art Of hoise terror of 'No Can Do.'" Hard Report.

"This is a fine album, being at once innovative yet accessible, much like Art of Hoise." Alternative Press

"Binary Race's Tom Ware produces a delightful change of electronic musical direction that melds the best features of Kraftwerk, 808 State and Einsturzende Neubauten with a musical sense of levity that keeps the entire project light. You can imagine all of the comparisons individually, but please scape these concurrently. An individual achievement that deserves attention from electronic music freaks and anyone who enjoys innovation."

Rockpool CD \$18 00 Cassette \$5.00



RAY CARMEN

Nothing Personal

"Charming pappy songs which are quite clever with delightful bridges, hooks and riffs. Actually, this is quite brilliant, and a great break."

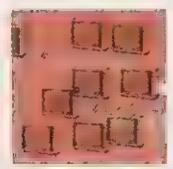
ND Magazini

"A most welcome surprise, it's kind of nice and a welcome change of pace to see and hear somebody out there keeping power pop alive and well."

Loafing the Donkey

'This is a refreshing taste of glimmering pop gems, seamlessly crafted, performed by an artist who abviously loves the pop form." **Gajoob**CD \$10 00 Cassette \$5.00

COMPACT DISKS & CASSETTES



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EVERY GOOD BOY

Social Graces

"Unlike too many musicians with a point to make, Every Good Boy puts as much, maybe more, faith in their music as in their lyrics, and that makes a big difference. You have to admire a band nobody's heard of that writes a no-sell-out song; you end up liking them when you discover that you're singing along." Option

"Every Good Boy deliver a packet of seemingly simple music that emotes complex moods. In a way, you could draw comparisons all day with Every Good Boy, but the end result would lack like a who's who list of progressive/avant music. It's probably best to simply say this is a one-of-a-kind disc for the musically adventurous. Social Graces isn't afraid to venture where others stray. Dig the new breed." Illinois Entertainer "Every Good Boy takes pop music, slows it down to the pace of the Twin Peaks soundtrack, and ads enough twists to each song to give this CO an

almost eerie feeling, almost as if Rod Serling had engineered this CD."

"This is a very quiet album for all its many instruments; there's a well thought-out atmosphere that is calm and intelligent." The Splatter Effect CD \$10.00 Cassette \$5.00



EVERY GOOD BOY

Baling Wire & Bubblegum

"Every Good Boy are anomalous to every decade in recent memory, but the band's frighteningly well-developed sense of style and panache with arrangements have a fearless ambition, reconciling the late-70s schism between punk/indie raw emotion and grander, more 'commercial' productions " CM)

"Where many a Manchester band has failed, Every Good Boy has derived a perfect archival sense of what the 70s psychedelic sound was all about Baling Wire & Bubblegum speaks to this 70s dementia without being the least bit nostalgic." Alternative Press
CD \$10.00 Cassette \$5 00



FACT TWENTYTWO

Energy, Work & Power

"Energy, Work & Power is a very strong album. Fact Twenty-Two has a distinct and undeniable similarity to Depeche Mode, both in synthesizer and lyrical style, but with an American twist. Probably the best example of weirdness derived from normality is 'Mood Ring,' which starts with a startling, sampled 'Helio!' and proceeds with the sound of a squeaky swing set. This is one of four excellent instrumentals on this versatile, danceable recording "Alternative Press

"Fact TwentyTwo sounds like Depeche Mode-style electropop slamming into a wall of rusty factory parts and shortwave radios." Pulse
(D 510.00)



FACT TWENTYTWO

The Biographic Humm

"James Towning is a maverick in his genre, and hopefully The Biograph<u>ic</u> Humm will cause a few ripples." Rockpool

"Rarely resorting to a monolithic drum track and never bolstering the songs with blatant ego gestures, the wizard behind fact TwentyTwo's controls employs common mechanical gadgetry with an unshakable eccentricity that distinguishes this release from all the automatons, poseurs and technoterrorists." EMI

"Sparse, intelligent, sampled keyboard arrangements; and a suave Paddy McAloan-ish vocal caress in a modest, post-paranoid, nuclear-free dystopia peopled with tales of shrinking men, sleepwalkers, citizens Kafka and Jae, and the most important man in the world." Option Cassette \$5.00



HONEY BARBARA

FeedLotLoopHole

"I used to think the best thing to come out of San Antonio aside from Flaco Jimenez and the Butthole Surfers was Interstate 35 North, which is a straight shot at Austin and the promised land. But hey, here comes this really odd band called Honey Barbara." Puncture

"If you want to expand yer borders, this is the place to start."

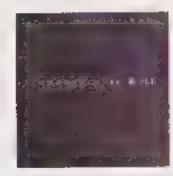
Loafing the Donkey

"Honey Barbara are two, Texan guitarist/bassist/keyboardists who like to swap instruments, stand in front of drum machines and spin an updated, many-layered form of southwestern cactus music. It would ne nice if there was a place in rack'n'rall future for southwestern eccentrics."

The Splatter Effect

"Whatever they sound like, I'll be damned if I can come up with even one comparison! Honey Barbara sound like, well, Honey Barbara. Now that's saying something." Baby Sue Music Review

"You just might love Honey Barbara if you want some really quirky stuff to sink your brain into. The honey of FeedLotLoopHole isn't sweet. But it's sure pretty tasty." B-Side
Cassette \$5.00



STEPHEN SHEEHAN

Innocence at Will

"It's about time his innovative work is available in the U.S."

The Hard Report

********** ******* **** ****

"There's a decidedly European twist to Sheehan's stylings as he admits to the following influences: the Cure, Joy Division, Eno and Blue Nile, as well as 4AD artists like Dead Can Dance." Alternative Press
"I find this album brilliant." Manifesto
CD \$10.00



SUPERCOLLIDER

Supercollider

"This unit achieves a hypnotic mixture of aggression and restraint, the sparse and the lush that recalls minimalist composers at their most vital."

Rockpool
"Supercollider's debut is a coolly studied practice of sophistication and orchestral self-containment." CMJ

"Because of their grunge-like name and their utter dissimilarity to that type of sound, Supercollider is a refreshing foray into a more cerebral type of Nirvana. Perhaps an acquired taste, but the quirkiness ultimately rewards." Throttle

"There are no catchy charuses on this tape, and no crashing crescendos, either Oh so calmly, I turn on the boombox and let out a quiet whosp of enjoyment" File 13
CD \$19.00 Cassette \$5.00



SUPERCOLLIDER

Due

"Starkly beautiful gustar 'n' drum clang, over which world-weary vocals a lo john Cale lie down nicely . . all of which add up to one of the sweeter discs to cross this desk recently " Pulse

"Musically and lyrically, it's sparse and often discordant, always minimalist, and never boring. <u>Dual</u> is a shifting string of moods, all somewhat peaceful and subtly different. Quite an experience." INK

"Supercollider do indeed forge a new musical nomenclature, but in the name of innovation. Qual is a shard of parcelain removed from Sonic Youth's Bad Moon Rising, yet it creates a hypnotic mood throughout the album much like Galaxy 500's On Fire." Alternative Press

"They sound to me like a band made up of Phillip Glass, Steve Reich and the singer from the Blue Nile with Thurston Moore from Sonic Youth producing and adding an occasional overdub. This is pop music, but it really stretches the boundaries a bit." Heckler

"The dua's minor-key monochromatic throbs and strums are laid out like a single curve plotted on a graph, admirable in its cleanliness and scientific in its fluctuations. Its absolute, unrelenting insistence on sterility and its scientific use of synthesized minimalism creates sculptured, concrete tones, the vocals imparting a sense of existential melancholy, setting it apart from the kitschiness of modern ambient grooves, as well as its new-wavey predecessors." CMI

'This is mood music, pure and not so simple." Grey City Journal
"To my own taste, it's one of the best records of the post year, but it may be
a bit hord to digest for the faint of heart or everyday rock'n'roller. Some
may find Supercollider a fitting substitute for Joy Division, but, frankly, I
find them quite worthy in their own right." The Splatter Effect
CD \$10.00 Cossette \$5,00





AUDIOAFTERBIRTH

Addictions+Meditations

Music and video by P. Scott Makela and Laurie Haycock (D \$15 80



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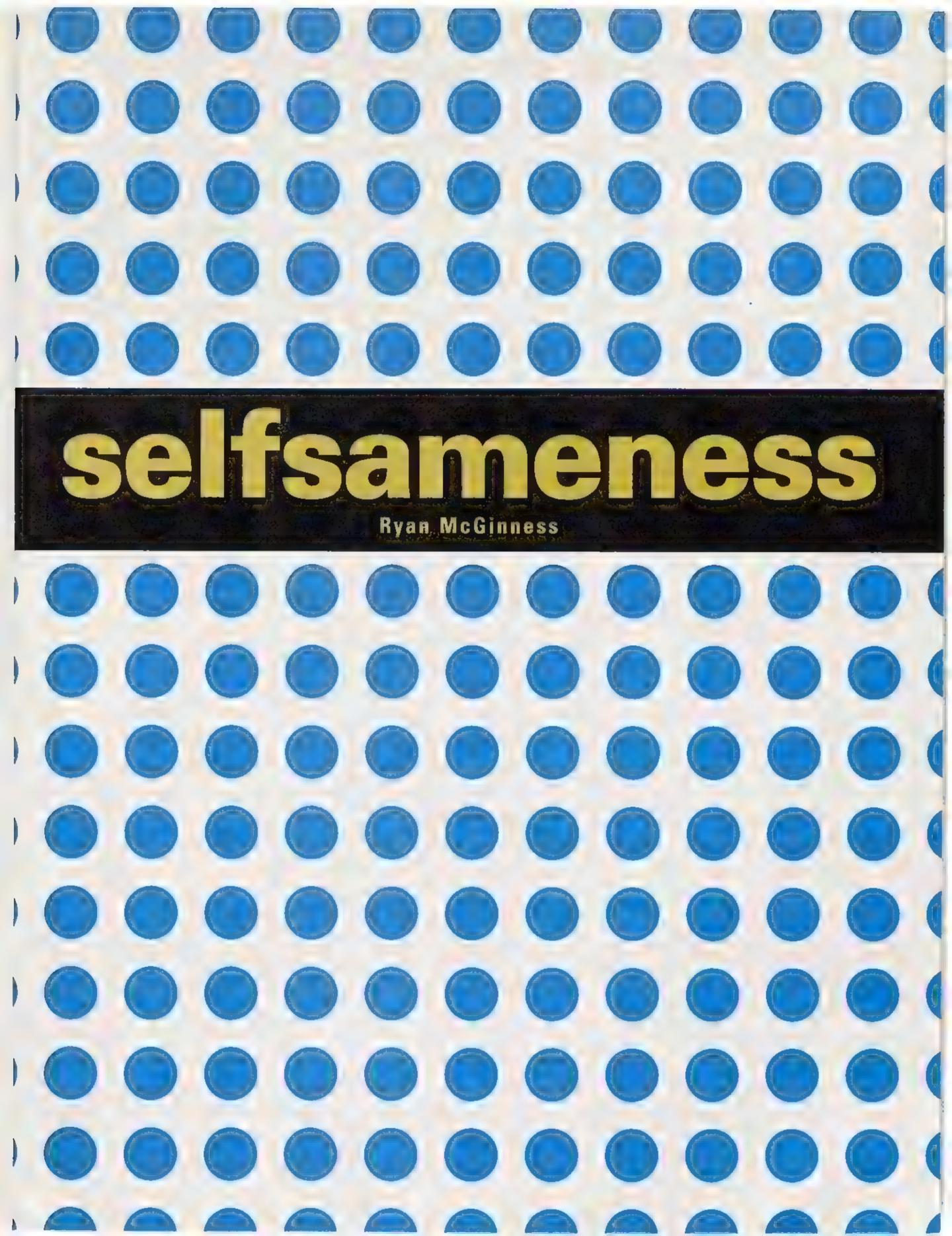
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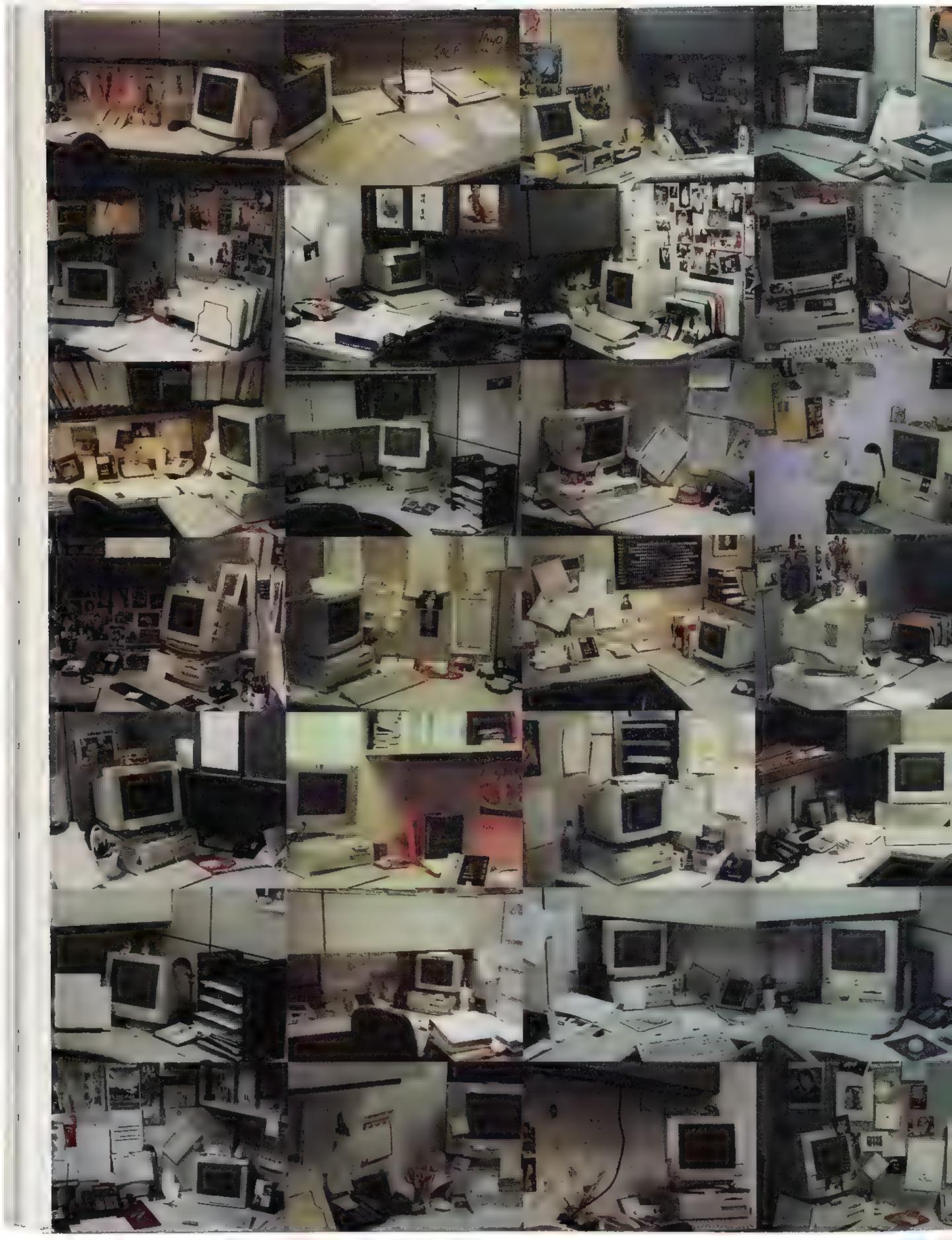
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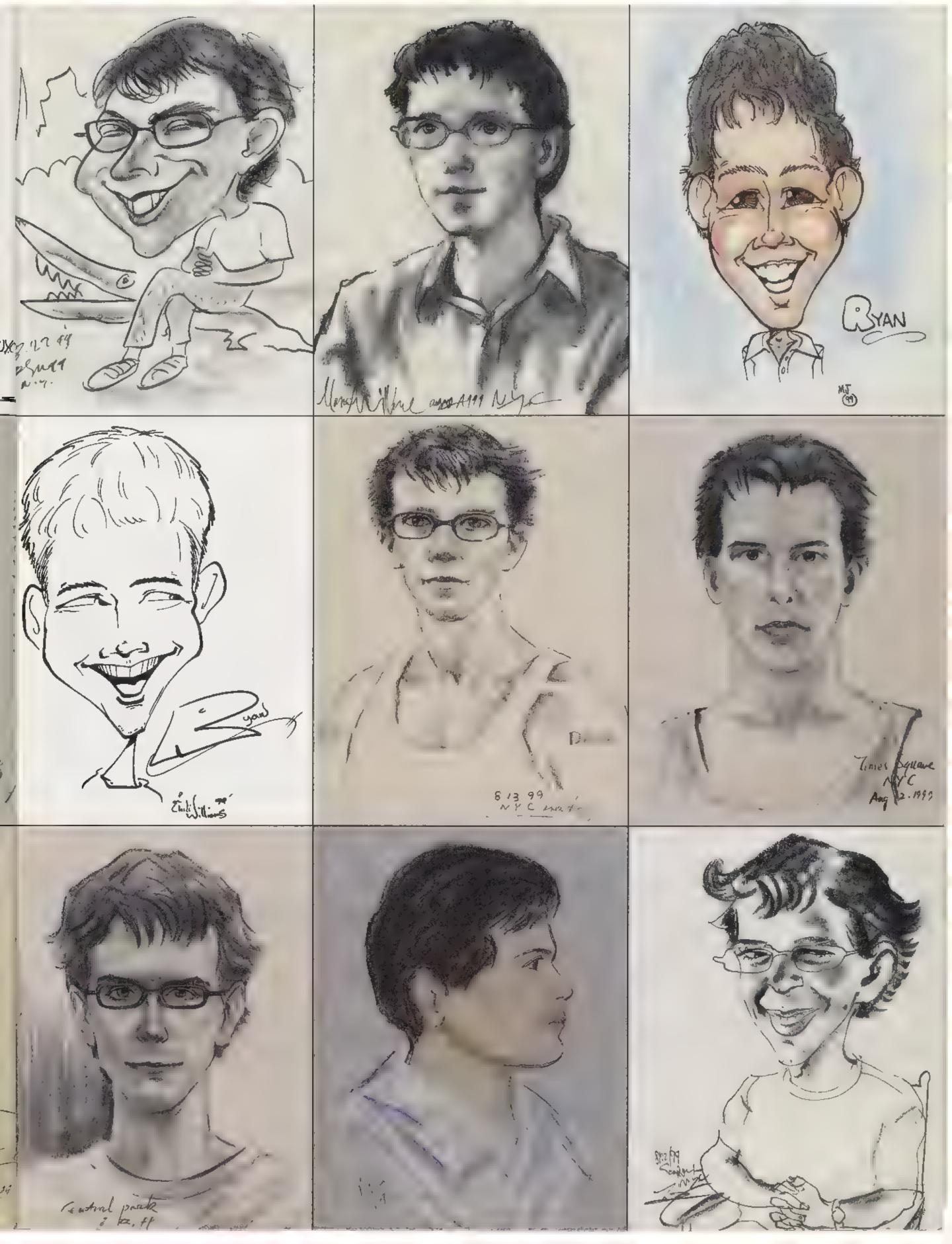
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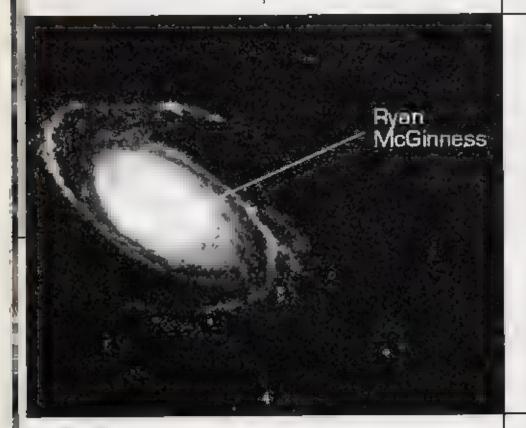








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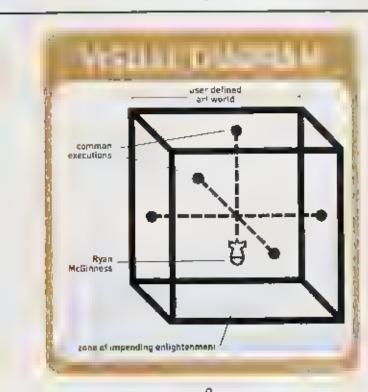




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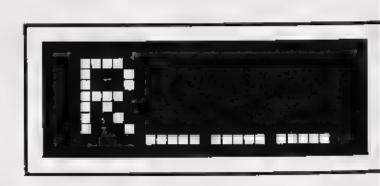


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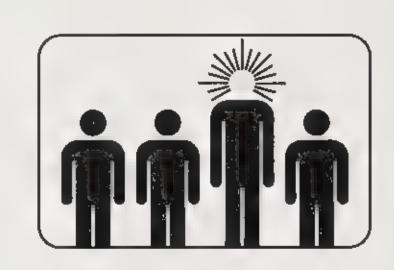














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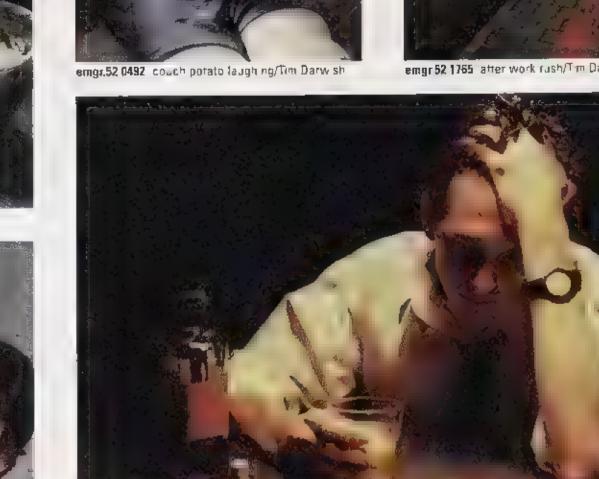
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NO COMMERCIAL VALUE

INTERROBANG

THIS ODD & ESOTERIC character is derived from combining the exclamation point and question mark.

Using a Futura question mark as its basis, this character takes on an even richer meaning.

Inset photograph
THE TELEDYNE ROTOLITE
SL-42/20 diazo processor



DIAZO HAIKU

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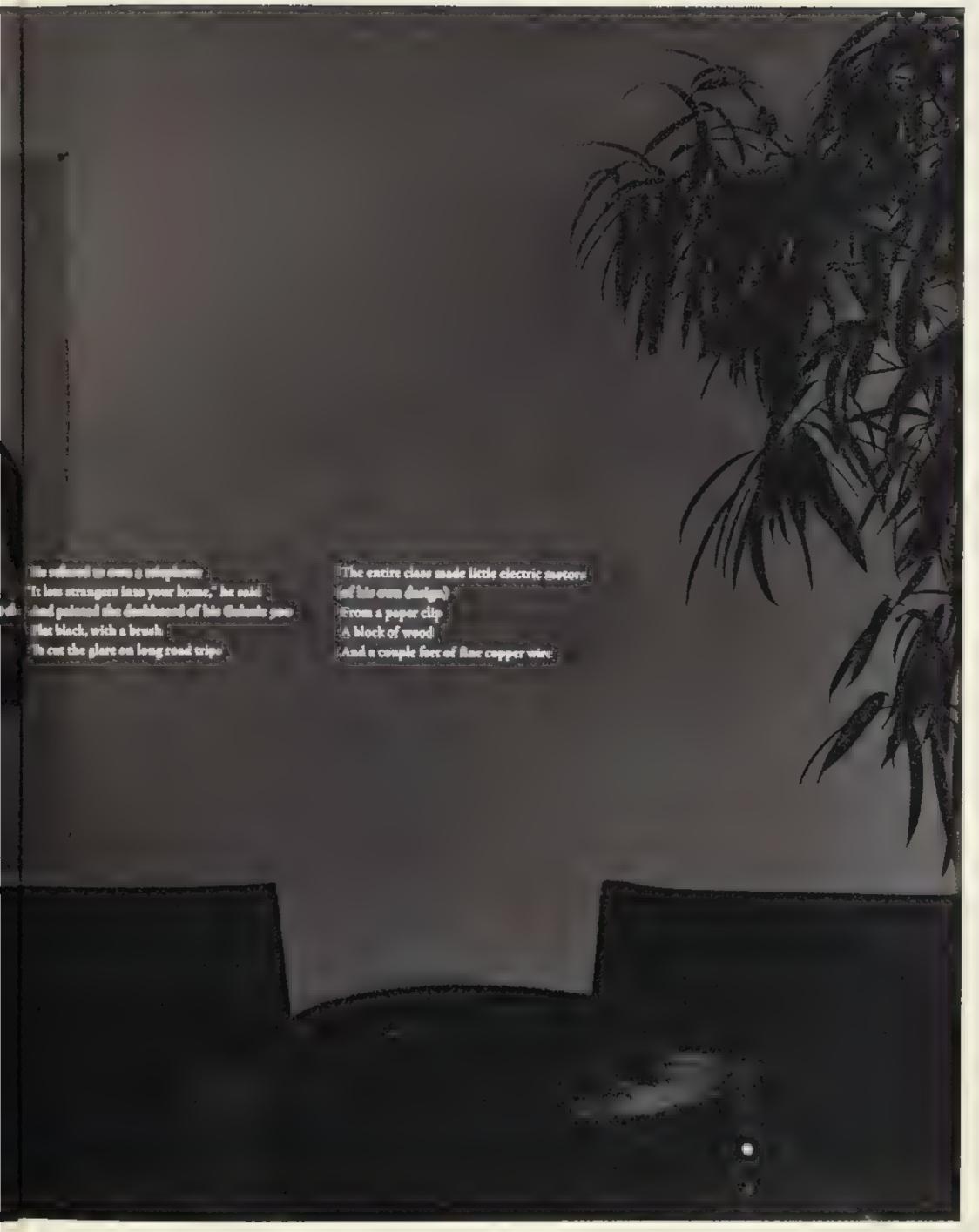
TYPO~GRAPHIC DISPLAYS

by
BOB DAHLQUIST

E'm a graphic designer Stubbarnness alone will see me through whose work largely consists of typographic treatments, logotypes, and identity systems. But the werk shown on these pages are all personal projects. Here, I'm not dealing with the usual requirement of commercial work, but rother in personal musings and honored acknowledgments to friends, teachers and Nature, which continues to be an invaluable source of inspiration. Many of these pieces realized through the ammonia-based diazo or "blueprint" process, reflect the ethereof qualities of light and shadow. In some, the photosensitive papers have been exposed in direct sunlight to make life-sized photograms. Non Dahlquist

THE ORIGINAL SEA WAR

A TRANSLUCENT MYLAR diazo photogram flores when type is projected anto it.



IN CARTOGRAPHIC nomenclature, the symbol for a railroad track resembles a scor





PROJECTED IMAGERY IS selectively manipulated by blurring focus and "muffling" the four projection paths



ROY G BIV
The visible spectrum of light,
falling between
infrared and ultraviolet



LONG-TAILED WEASEL

Mustela frenata

THOUGH seldom seen, the most widespread of wild carnivores in the Western Hemisphere.

Capable of a wide variety of vocalizations, Mustela frenata is known to purr like a cat when content.

"THANK YOuth

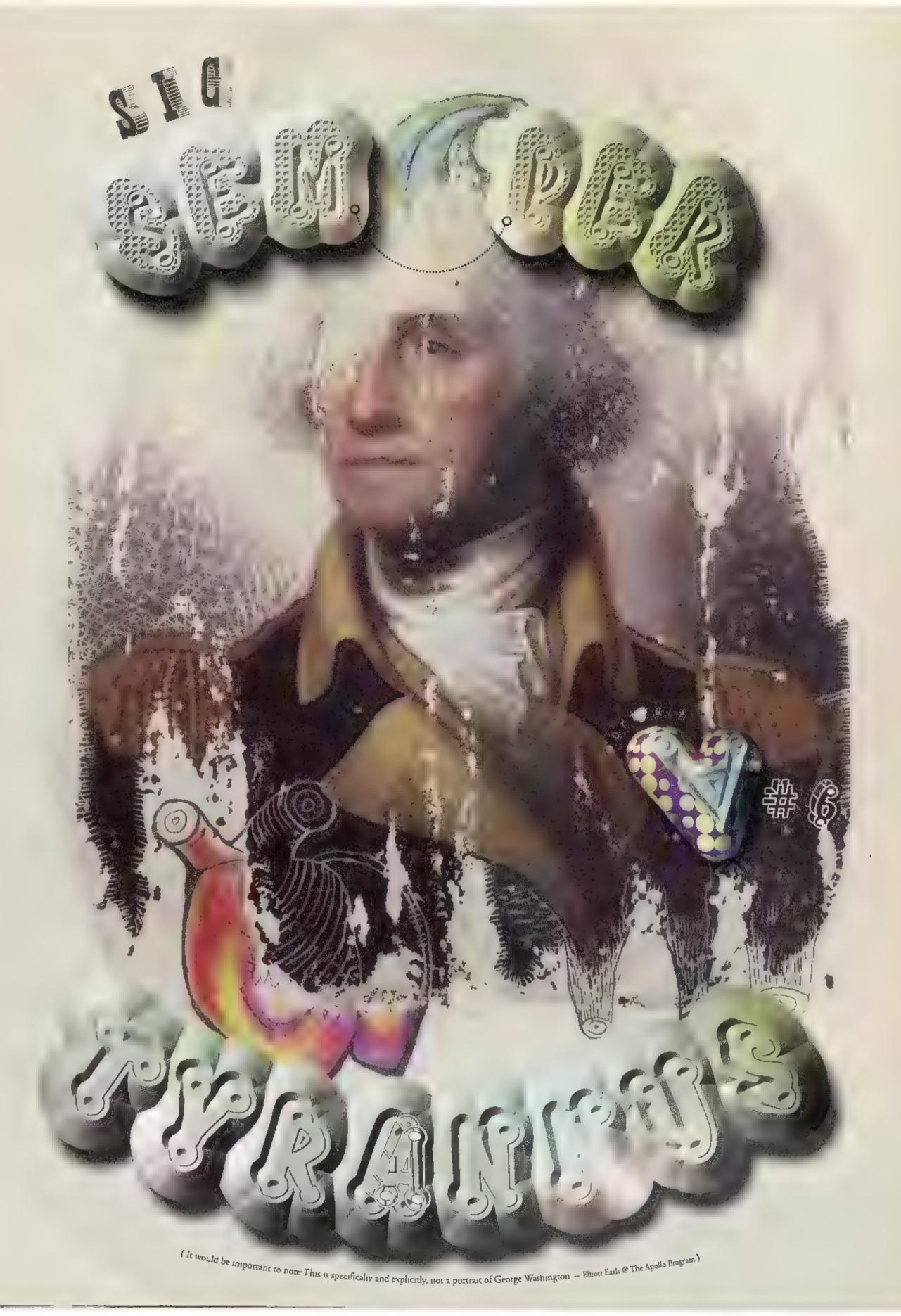


Typefaces used in this article are Vendetta and Base 9

Thank you too: Bob Androvich, T mothy Archiba d Lithographics and N no Courtney Photographics, Gene Rush Peter Soucerman and Dreyfuss & Blackford Architects

@ 1999 Robert H Daniquist, bob@bobshaus.com

ORANGE! Steek and serpentine A slight squeek and a short pause Before bounding away in long fluid arcs





A Brief History of the

DESERET ALPHABET

In 1847 Mormon Pioneers, fleeing their homes in Nauvoo, Illinois, arrived in the Salt Lake Valley. Here on the shores of the Great Salt Lake, they had an opportunity to build a new society from the ground up. They believed they were building "The Kingdom of God," and under the direction of Brigham Young, their prophet, they experimented in almost every aspect of society from economics to city planning to government.

Soon after the Mormon Pioneers arrived, Brigham Young commissioned the Board of Regents of the newly formed University of Deseret to reform the written English language (a popular subject of the day.) This topic, often referred to as "orthographic reform," was not just of local concern. In England in the 1840s, Isaac Pitman, who developed the first practical and widely studied shorthand system, developed a phonetic writing system known as "the Pitman alphabet," which initially had a large influence on the Mormons' project.

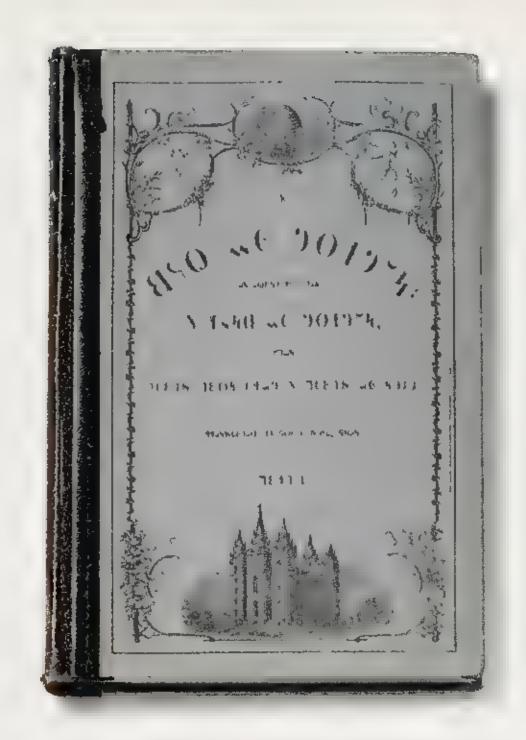
Brigham Young in his address at the Mormon April Conference of 1852 said:

I have asked the Board of Regents to cast out from their system of education the present orthography and written form of our language, that when my children are taught the graphic sign for 'A,' it may always represent that individual sound only. But as it is now, the child is perplexed that the sign 'A' should have one sound in mate, a second sound in father, a third sound in fall, a fourth sound in man, and a fifth sound in many, and in other combinations, sounding different from these, while in others, 'A' is not sounded at all. I say, let it have one sound all the time. And when 'P' is introduced into a word, let it not be silent as in Phthisic, or sound like F in Physic, and let two not be placed instead of one in apple.

In 1855 the legislature dutifully voted an appropriation of \$2,500 for the casting of a font of type. The original metal type was cast in St. Louis, a local attempt having failed.

Through 1859 and 1860, Brigham Young's journals were being kept in the new alphabet, as well as some Church records. By 1860, the Deseret Alphabet had appeared in newspaper articles, on handbills and shop signs, in journals and private correspondence, on a gold coin and even on few tombstones. In 1867 money was again appropriated; and in 1868, two volumes of "readers" were printed for use in schools. In 1869 the Book of Mormon was published in the Deseret Alphabet. Over \$18,500 (a huge sum in those days) had been





Left The Deseret First Book
reader published by the Regents
of the Deseret University in 1868
Right: The Book of Mormon
published for the Deseret University
by Russell Bros. in 1869

spent on printing Deseret Alphabet books. All of this effort couldn't overcome the greatest difficulty facing all such reforms: the lack of popular support.

In 1869 the Deseret News reported "There is no good prospect of the system becoming general in its use. It has the prejudice of the age to contend with, and it meets with strong opposition."

A local educational Journal, The Juvenile Instructor, reported in 1875:

The Book of Mormon has been printed in the Deseret Alphabet, but President Young has decided that they are not so well adapted for the purpose designed as it was hoped they would be. There being no shanks to the letters, all being very even, they are trying to the eye, because of their uniformity. Another objection some have urged against them has been that they are entirely new, and we should have characters as far as possible with which we are familiar; and they have felt that we should use them as far as they go and adopt new characters only for the sounds which our present letters do not represent.

In the end, the alphabet died with Brigham Young.

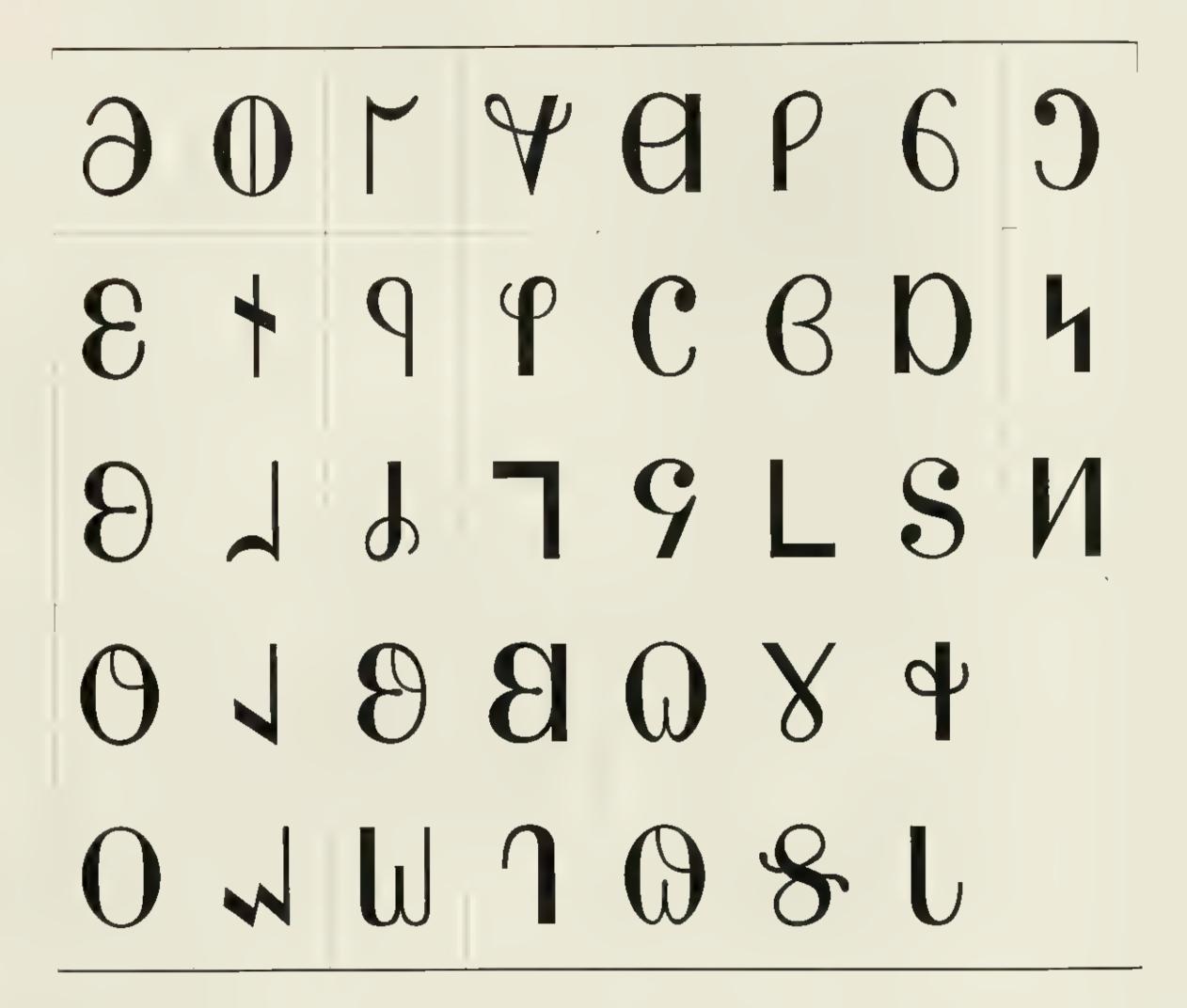
DESERET ALPHABET

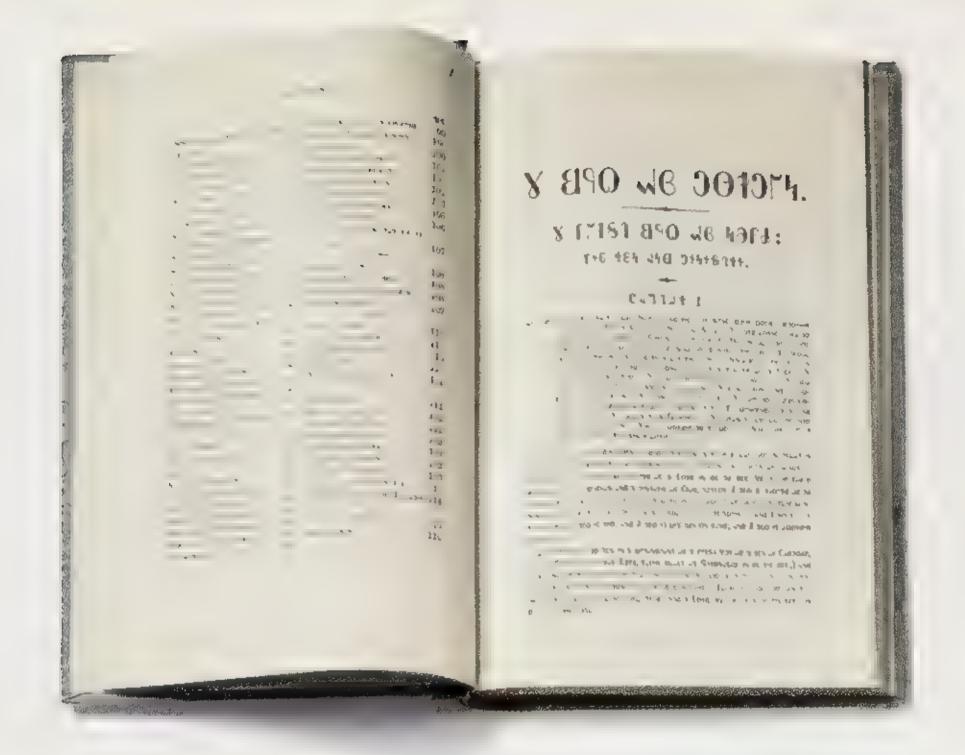
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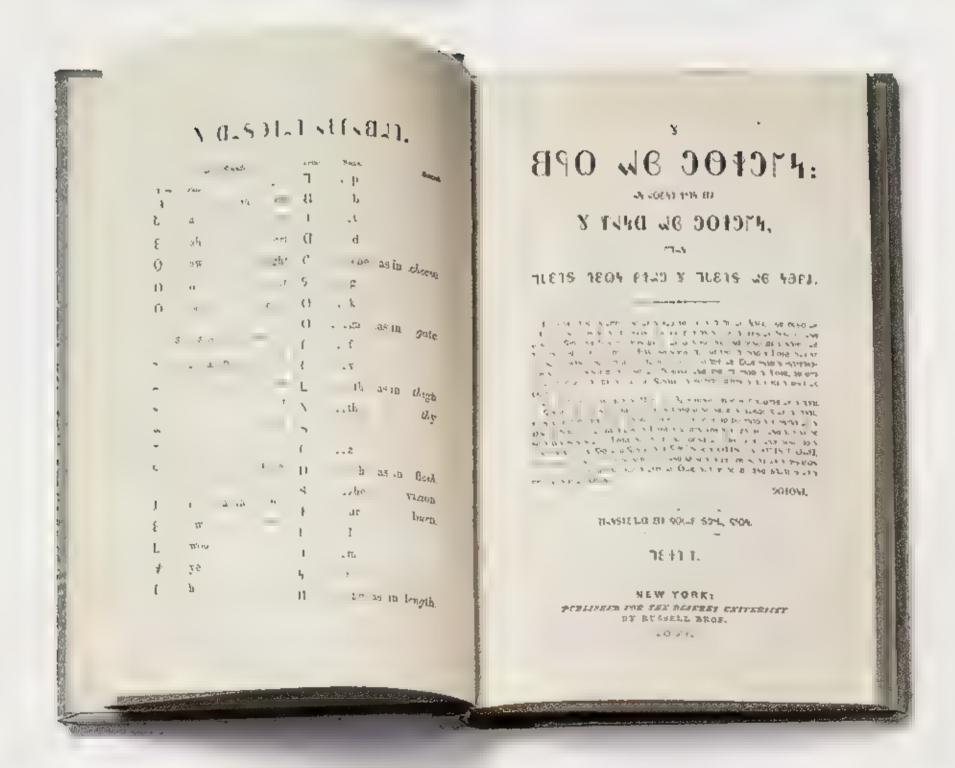
This font was digitally redrawn from enlargements from The Second Deseret Book published in 1868.

The Deseret Alphabet is a phonetic alphabet—you spell words as they sound, not as they're written in the dictionary. Occasionally you'll run across words that have different pronunciations (You say toe-may-toe, I say toe-mah toe.) This caused great debate among the creators of the Deseret Alphabet—and there's no official answer to this problem

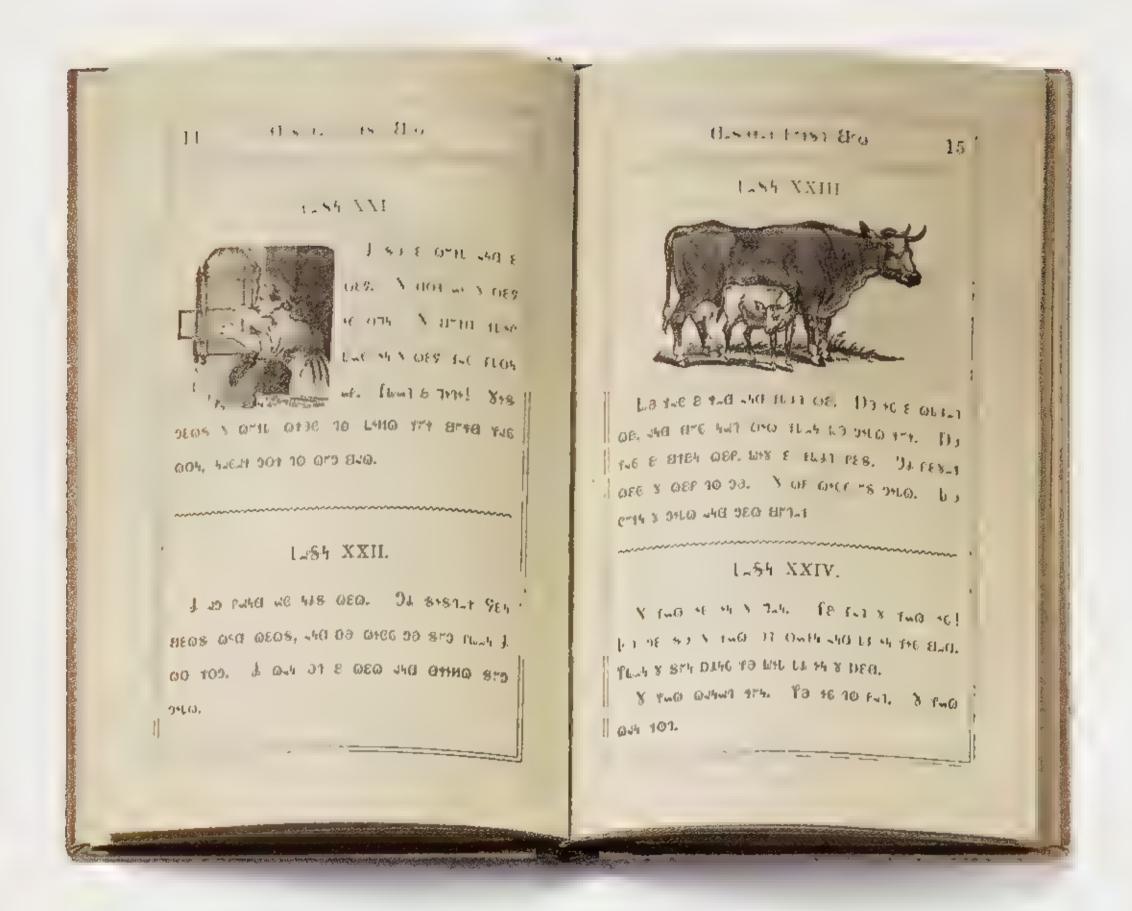
The Deseret Alphabet made no distinction between upper- and lowercase letters other than size – the lowercase letters being about 70% of the size of the uppercase characters







LETTER				LE'FTER		
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3	a	as in ate.		B	b	
8	ah	as in art.		1	t	
0	aw	as in aught.		a	d	
0	0	as in oat.	<u>4</u>	c	ch	as in cheese.
0	00	as in ooze.		9	g	as in geo
SHORT SOUNDS				O	k	
	i	as in it.		0	ga	as in gate.
1	е	as in et.	·į	ρ	f	
	a	as in at.		В	v	
	0	as in ot.		L	eth	as in thigh.
	u	as in ut.		γ	the	as in thy.
9	00	as in book.		8	S	
				6	Z	
DOUBLE SOUNDS		, as in ice.		D	esh	as in flesh.
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Inside spread from The Descret First Book Published by the Regents of the Descret University in 1868 The two species have this in zommon, whose er hoppens in the jump, and in the sing stress along criticis. The Penales bring out the old people, the great ignandance of the great again, the factors in the fair of the car is tolk about the environment before it are runed. But this note not mean directive unto in measures of the adjustment of the correct the children und pollow when they grow up the Penales of a sit this house in the neighborhood highline the Lores of a creating upon founds in the latter are fully expectable in inglicities in the neighborhood runch houses of scariffic marmining triadity inter-upling one unother haplay, businessing, and remain object faughtes also be supposed in the correction of scariffic marmining triadity inter-upling one unother haplay, businessing, and remain object faughtes.

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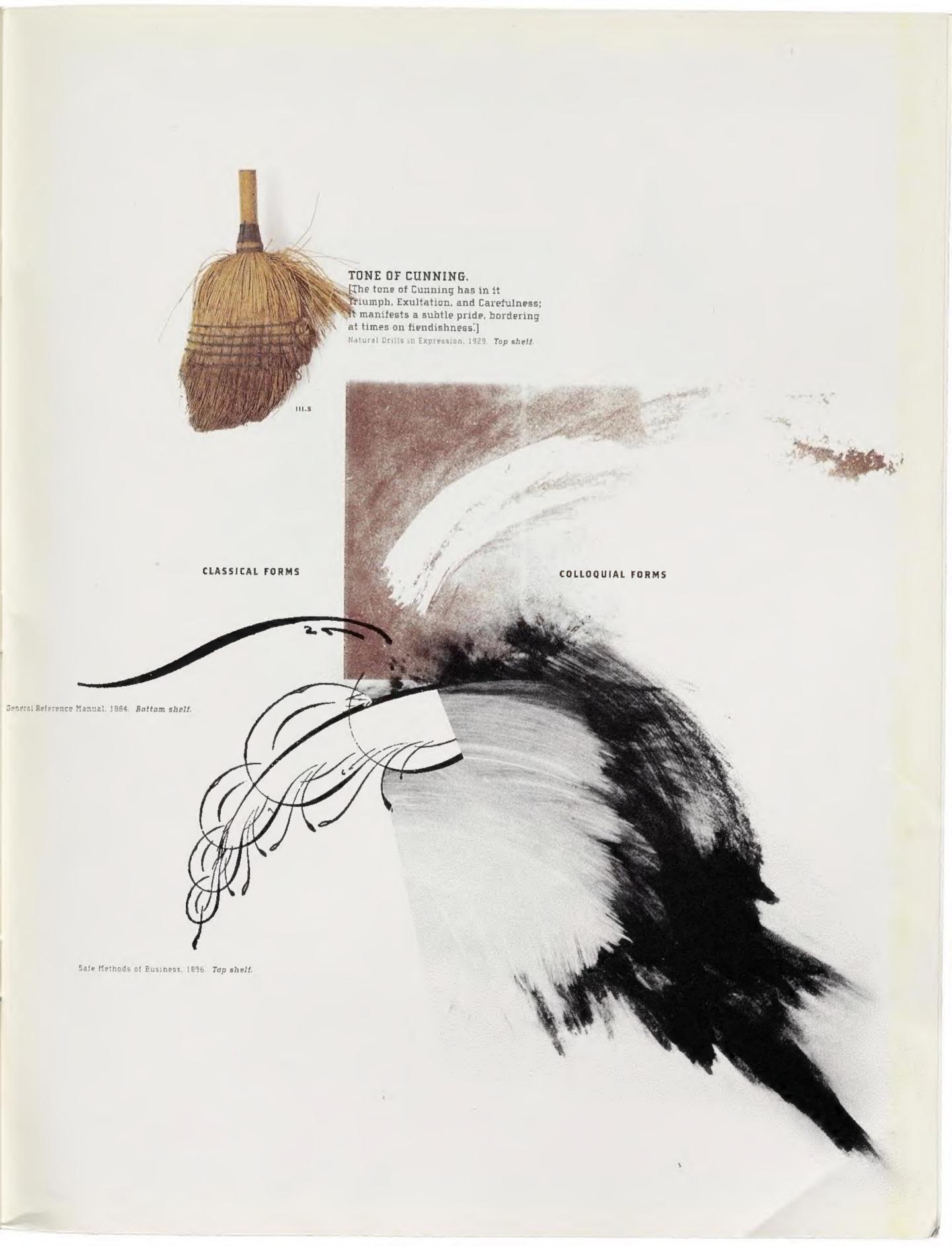


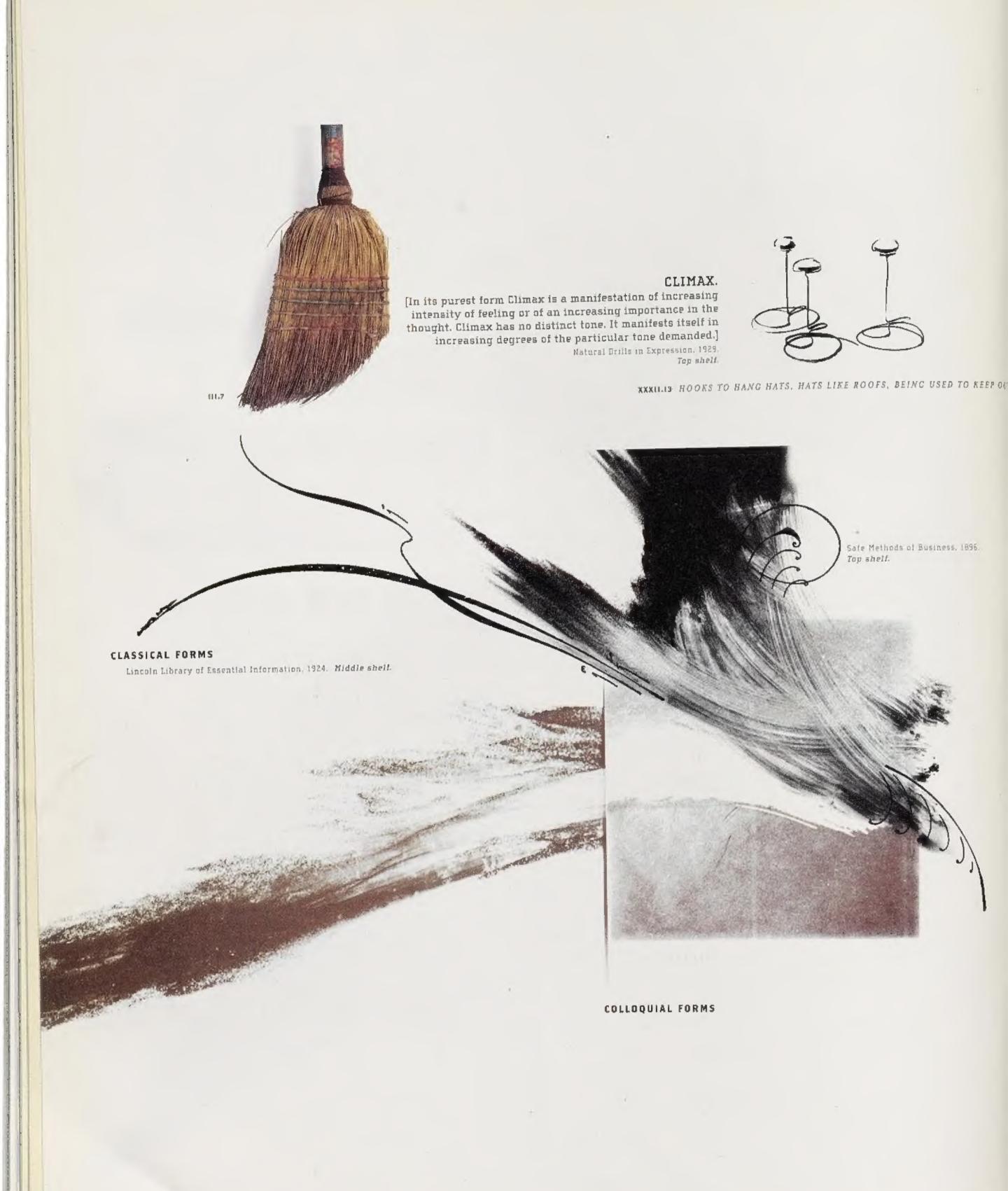
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Correction!

After receiving the printed copies of Emicre 51, I found out, to my horror, that sections of the piece "Inhabiting Forms: Visible Citizens" were missing. As the editor and art director of Emigre I take full responsibility for a mistake like this, as I am the one who signs off on the final color proofs. Perhaps something didn't spool right or didn't download properly—in short, a computer error caused by a human (me). I guess that's one of the drawbacks when you run a magazine pretty much by yourself. Not enough eyes to check things properly.

We could have kept this quiet and perhaps no one would have ever noticed the difference. But this is a magazine about graphic design and I figured we must at least get that part right. Graphic design has many dimensions but it will always remain, to a large degree, a visual and formal exercise. That part will always be important. For that reason alone we felt the need to show you the complete design, as it was intended. So here goes, with my apologies to Stephen Farrell.









Motive.

Inspiration comes

from lots of places.

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